

THE
RIVAL MOTHER:
OR, THE
HISTORY
OF THE
Countess DE SALENS,
AND
Her two DAUGHTERS.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.



LONDON:

Printed for F. NOBLE, at his Circulating Library
in *King-street, Covent-Garden*; and J. NOBLE,
at his Circulating Library in *St. Martin's-
Court, near Leicester-Square*.

MDCCLV.

THE
RIVAL MOTHER

HISTORY

COURTESY OF THE
LORDS OF THE TREASURY



VOL. I

LONDON

Printed by J. G. & J. H. Smith, 10, Abchurch Lane, London, E.C. 4.
In the Strand, near the Temple, London, W.C. 2.
It is printed by the University of London Press, 10, Bedford Square, London, W.C. 1.
Glasgow, Edinburgh, and London.
MILTON



C O N T E N T S

T O T H E F I R S T V O L U M E.

C H A P. I.

O *F all Affliction taught a Lover yet,
'Tis sure, the hardest Science to forget.*

POPE. Page 1

C H A P. II.

————— *Love is a Passion,
Which kindles Honour into noble Acts.*

DRYDEN. 7

C H A P. III.

What Arts can blind a jealous Woman's Eyes?

DRYDEN. 14

C H A P. IV.

*Cowards have Courage when they fear not
Death.*

DRYDEN.

27

C H A P. V.

*We'll mock the Time with fairest Show;
Fair Face must hide, what the false Heart
doth know.*

SHAKESPEAR. 37

C H A P.

iv. C O N T E N T S.

C H A P VI.

*What ! shall Semanthe triumph in my Spoils ?
Shall she enjoy him all, while I stand wishing,
And, like a Spirit damn'd, am robb'd of Hope ?
O, Hell ! it mads my Reason but to think on't !
I shall become their May-game :*

*At their lose Intervals of calmer Love,
She'll hang upon his Lips, and beg him tell
The Story of my Passion o'er again !
Which he relates, and with a scornful Smile
Adds to my Shame, to make the Girl more
vain.*

SOUTHERNE. 54

C H A P. VII.

*Ob ! for a Curse upon the cunning Priest,
Who conjur'd us together in a Yoke
That galls me now.*

SOUTHERNE. 65

C H A P. VIII.

Falshood puts on the Face of simple Truth.

MIRROR for Magistrates. 78

C H A P. IX.

*———— We cheat the World
With florid Outside, 'till we meet Surprise ;
Then, Conscience working inward, like a Mole,
Crumbles the Surface, and reveals the Dirt,
From which our Actions spring.*

FENTON.

85

C H A P.

CONTENTS. v.

CHAP. X.

*All Days to me henceforth are equal:
To-morrow, and the next, and each that fol-
lows,*

*Will undistinguish'd, roll, and but prolong
One hated Line of more extended Woe.*

CONGREVE. 94

CHAP. XI.

*She loaths, detests him, flies his hated Presence,
And shrinks, and trembles at his hated Name.*

SMITH. 101

CHAP. XII.

*Some nat'ral Tears she dropp'd, but wip'd
them soon:*

*The World was all before her, where to chuse
Her Place of Rest, and Providence her Guide.*

MILTON. 113

CHAP. XIII.

So much is Beauty pleasing unto all.

DRAYTON. 123

CHAP. XIV.

*----- Ob the Pain of Pains,
Is when the fair one, whom our Soul is fond of,
Gives Transport, and receives it from another.*

YOUNG. 131

A 2

CHAP.

vi CONTENTS.

C H A P. XV.

*Behold as many Gallants here
With modest Guise, and silent Fear,
All to one Female Idol bend,
Whilst her high Pride does scarce descend
To mark their Follies.* WALLER.

142

C H A P. XVI.

----- *Diffimulation dwells,
As at her Home, in every Smile she wears.* SEWEL. 154

C H A P. XVII.

----- *Base Ingratitude
Is such a Sin to Friendship, as Heav'n's Mercy,
That strives with Man's untoward monstrous
Wickedness,
Unwearied with forgiving, scarce once pardons.* ROWE. 168

C H A P. XVIII.

To suppliant Virtue nothing is deny'd. GARTH. 180

C H A P. XIX.

*Women are govern'd by a stubborn Fate ;
Their Love's insuperable as their Hate ;
No Merit their Aversion can remove,
No ill Requital can efface their Love.* WALLER. 184
C H A P.

CONTENTS. vii

CHAP. XX.

----- *A Lover's like a Hunter;*
If the Game be got with too much Ease, he
cares not for't. HAUSTED.

194

CHAP. XXI.

Be thou as chaste as Ice, as pure as Snow,
Thou shalt not escape Calumny. SHAKESPEAR.

203

CHAP. XXII.

Such is the Posie, Love composes;
A stinging Nettle mix'd with Roses. BROWNE.

215

CHAP. XXIII.

Ev'n as one Heat another Heat expels,
Or, as one Nail, by Strength, drives out another,
So the Remembrance of my former Love,
Is, by a newer Object, quite forgotten.

SHAKESPEAR. 225

CHAP. XXIV.

Know of your Youth, examine well your Blood,
Whether you can endure the Liv'ry of a Nun;
For Aye to be in shady Cloisters mew'd,
To live a barren Sister all your Life,
Chaunting faint Hymns to the cold fruitless
Moon.

SHAKESPEAR. 236

CHAP.

viii CONTENTS.

CHAP. XXV.

*Are then the Joys of this blest Meeting dash'd
So soon, so soon will Fortune snatch thee from me,
And mock my vain Embrace?* TRAPP.

245

CHAP. XXVI.

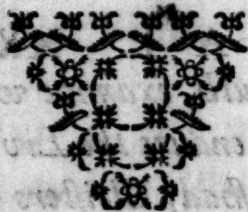
----- *Devotion in Distress
Is born, but vanishes in Happiness.* DRYDEN.

260

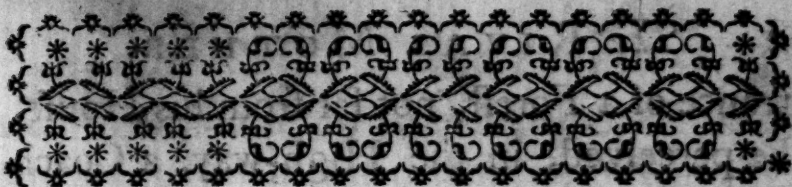
CHAP. XXVII.

*Marriage to Maids, is like a War to Men;
The Battle causes Fear, but the sweet Hope
Of winning at the last, still draws them in.*

LEE. 262



THE



T H E
RIVAL MOTHER, &c.

C H A P. I.

*Of all Affliction taught a Lover yet,
'Tis, sure, the hardest Science to forget!*

POPE.



THE Marquis de *Blesmont* being discontented with the Court, disgusted with the World, and dissatisfied with the Fair-Sex, had retired to a very fine Country Seat belonging to him, situated at a little Distance from *Paris*. There he had enjoyed, for more than six Years; solid Pleasures, the result of useful Reading, and the Conversation of a small Number of select Friends. One Day, as he was walking by the En-

VOL. I.

B

trance

2 *The RIVAL MOTHER.*

trance of a Forest, not far from his House, he perceived, in the High-way, a Coach standing still, a Woman extended on the Ground, and two others standing by, who seemed to be employed in assisting her. As he judged some Accident had happened, he hastened towards them, with the View to offer such Relief they might stand in Need of.

A Servant of the Ladies, addressing the Marquis, desired to know, if there was any House in the Neighbourhood, where he might carry the two Daughters of the Countess *de Salens*? The youngest of whom (said he) has just now fainted away, and we fear her Life is in Danger, so that we cannot possibly conduct her, to-day, to the Nunnery her Mother has directed she should be placed in. The Marquis offered his House, and accosted the young Ladies, whose Name he was no Stranger to.

Felicia, for that was the Name of the young Lady who had fainted, began to come to herself; her Beauty, and that of her Sister *Julia*, equally surprized him. He
told

told them, in a few Words, who he was, and earnestly intreated them to rest themselves in his Solitude. An old Chambermaid, named *Desburs*, without Hesitation, accepted his obliging Offer; she caused the young Ladies to get into the Coach, as she did herself, together with the Marquis, and they drove immediately to his House, where he directed a proper Apartment to be immediately made ready. *Felicia* was put to Bed and Blooded, and the Surgeon told Mrs. *Desburs*, that the young Lady's Illness might be of long continuance, and attended with some Danger: Which so alarmed her, that she directly wrote to the Countess, to acquaint her of her Daughter's Condition.

The Footman, who had first spoke to the Marquis, was directed to carry the Letter; and the Marquis de *Blesmont* cautioned him, to give the Countess as little Uneasiness as possible, in his Relation of the Accident which had happened to *Felicia*. The Servant answered there was no Reason to fear the News would greatly terrify his Mistress. And added, (with the

4 *The* RIVAL MOTHER.

Indiscretion but too observable amongst that Class of People) that he had been a Servant to the Countess de *Salens* for a considerable Time; that she had been a Widow about two Years; was a great Coquet, and still handsom enough to excite a Passion; that not thinking it advantagious to have continually with her two amiable Daughters, whose growing Charms might eclipse her own, she had sent them away that Morning to a Nunnery, of which one of her Sisters was Abbess; that when she took her Leave of them, she had promised *Julia*, her eldest Daughter, to take her from the Nunnery as soon as she could find a suitable Match for her; but, had commanded *Felicia* to reconcile her Inclination to the Mother's Will, which was to prepare herself for taking the Vail in a short Time, because she proposed to get her appointed Abbess of the Nunnery to which she sent her; that this Resolution had so affected the young Lady, that she was taken Ill in her Mother's presence, who was so far from being moved at it, that she made her depart without delay;
that

The RIVAL MOTHER. 5

that the mournful *Felicia* had not ceased Weeping ever since she began her Journey, and that at last she had fainted on the Road in the manner he had found her.

The Servant was inclined to have given the Marquis a more ample Account of all that related to the Countess and her Daughters, had he not been interrupted in his Narration, by an Order to set out immediately on his Errand.

The Countess was chagrined at the receipt of *Desburs's* Letter, tho' 'tis certain *Felicia's* Illness was not the Cause of it. She found herself, however, obliged thro' Decency, to quit *Paris*, and to leave behind her, what she held most dear, the *Baron de Granville*. That young Gentleman had been acquainted with the Countess for more than a Year; the Complaisance and Regard which that Widow paid him, laid him under a Necessity of returning it, with a Gallantry and Assiduity, which she mistook for Love, though she was now above forty Years old, and still thought herself capable of giving Birth to a violent Passion.

6 *The RIVAL MOTHER.*

The Baron *de Granville* having learned from her, the Occasion of her leaving *Paris*, was seiz'd with so great a Melancholy that she pitied him; he would have accompanied her, but she opposed it; departed, and arrived at the Marquis's at the very Time *Felicia* was judged to be at the point of Death.

No sooner was the Countess alighted, than *Julia* came and fell at her Feet, all in Tears, and conjured her to restore Life to her Sister, by assuring her she would not compel her to become a Nun. You may, Madam, said she, recover her from the dangerous Situation she is now in, by putting an End to her Fears on that Account. If you are firmly resolved to devote *one* of your Daughters to the Service of God, be *mine* the Lot. Far from being terrible to *me*, it will enable me to gratify my Inclination for a quiet and retired Life, and I shall, at least, have the Pleasure to think, that my Sister is Happy.

The Countess listened with great Impatience to her Daughter's Discourse, and causing her to rise, answered, I shall readily

The RIVAL MOTHER. 7

dily promise *Felicia* what I have no Design to perform; but the first Thing worthy our Attention is, the Recovery of her Health, we shall afterwards take Care to bring her to Reason.

C H A P. II.

*Love is a Passion,
Which kindles Honour into noble Acts.*

DRYDEN.

THE Baron *de Blefemont* being told the Countess was arrived, came to wait on her with his accustomed Politeness. The first Complements passed, they went into the Patient's Chamber; who, at the Sight of her Mother, was seized with a violent Trembling. The Countess found her so altered, that she could not help being a little moved at it; she embraced her, bid her endeavour to recover her Health, and promised not to force her Inclinations. *Felicia* took her by the Hand, which she bathed with her Tears, and making an Effort to speak, replied,

8 *The RIVAL MOTHER.*

plied, I hope, Madam, I shall deserve your Goodness, and beg you'll be assured, I shall obey your Orders without Resistance. I dare not pretend to say, but that this Mark of Obedience will be painful to me beyond Expression, and I only beg the Favour of you to grant me two Years to reconcile myself to it.

The Countess complied with all she requested, and went out of the Chamber, that she might no longer behold a Spectacle so unpromising to her Designs. In the mean Time, *Felicia* grew worse, and the Physicians gave no Hopes of her Life. But Time and Youth got the better of the Danger, and it was soon after judged, she would entirely recover her Health.

The Baron *de Blefemont*, who had taken Care she should want nothing in his Power during her Illness, was pleased, upon her Recovery, to invite some of the most agreeable Company in the Neighbourhood to entertain her, and had the Art to contrive every Day, some new Pleasure to retain the Countess. He said, *Felicia* was affected by a deep Melancholy, which
must

The RIVAL MOTHER. 9

must be dispelled; and, in Truth, he omitted no Means proper to effect it.

The Marquis, tho' more than fifty Years of Age, was still amiable, he was above the middling Size, and well shaped, his Countenance was graceful, and of a Character and Understanding, which even Slander itself could never impeach.

One Evening, as the Countess was playing at Cards, under the Shade of a Walk of Chesnut Trees, which led to several Groves, *Julia* and *Felicia*, desirous of reading some new Books the Marquis had furnished them with, went into different Arbors, where they had no Cause to fear Interruption.

Julia had not sat long, before she saw the Marquis *de Blesemont* enter. He addressed her in a very respectful manner, and said to her, pardon me, fair *Julia*, if I interrupt your reading a Moment: I am come to disclose to you *my* Sentiments, and to be informed of *yours*. In a Word then, Madam, I love you! Permit me then to declare my Passion to you, not with the Transports of a young Man, for

10 *The RIVAL MOTHER.*

such would surely ill become my Years. I come to lay at your Feet, that Respect, that Tenderness, with which you inspired me the Moment I first beheld you, and which has been augmented by your many generous Sentiments I have been witness to. The Passion I have for you is warm and lively, tho' not extravagant: This has inspired me with Boldness to make you an offer of my Hand; this makes me hope you will not disapprove the Sentiments I have entertained of you; this, in a Word, governed by Reason, will make me sacrifice my Love to your Quiet, by engaging the Countess to make you happy, even with another, if your Heart is already engaged. Tell me then, with that Sincerity which is due to the Love I bear you, whether or not you are Mistress of your Heart? And if you have lost it, I swear, that how jealous soever I should be of the happy Possessor, I will doom my Love to perpetual Silence; but if you yet are Free, if my Age does not fright you, if my Person is not disagreeable to you, tell it me, I entreat you, my fairest *Julia*, that
I may

The RIVAL MOTHER. II

I may ask your Mother's Permission to make my Addresses to you, that I may put an End to your Journey in this House, and make you the Mistress of all I possess.

Julia, who was greatly surprized at this Declaration, with a Blush, reply'd, that though she was not so happy as to be well acquainted, yet she had a very great Esteem for him; that her Heart was entirely free from any Engagement of that Kind, and ready to obey the Commands of the Countess her Mother; that, however, she desired he would consider he had not yet had Time enough to discover, whether she merited the Honour he proposed to confer on her.

The Marquis, who had some Room to fear that *Julia's* Answer would not have been so favorable, was extremely well pleased with it. He told her, that the Knowledge he had of her good Qualities, was more than sufficient to convince him, he should be the happiest Man in the World, could he obtain her; I'll go, added he, this Moment and acquaint the Countess of my Intentions.

Saying

12 *The* RIVAL MOTHER.

Saying these Words, he immediately departed, without giving her Time to return him any answer.

Uncertain what to resolve, she could scarce tell what were her own Sentiments, on an Affair of so great Importance. She was but eighteen Years old, and plainly saw the great Disproportion between her own Age and that of the Marquis.— However, as her Affections were not engaged, and she knew the Marquis to be a Man of high Birth, Rich and Virtuous, she concluded she might live very happily with him; she was likewise very sensible, that in the Marriage of Persons of her Rank, Inclination was seldom consulted, and foresaw, that if she refused the Marquis, to whom she had not the least Dislike, she might be obliged to marry the Man she mortally hated.

She quitted the Arbor, to find out her Sister and tell her this News. As she was seeking her in the Grove, she saw the Marquis and the Countess walking, and engaged in a very lively Conversation; she endeavoured to avoid them, but the
Countess

Countess called her, and bid her for the future, consider the Marquis *de Blefemont* as the Man who was to be her Husband; for, added she, he has just now done me the Honour to ask my Consent to marry you; which I have granted with the greatest Readiness, being extremely pleased to have so worthy a Son-in-Law; and, continued she, we are about to settle every Thing so, as that the Marriage may be celebrated in eight or ten Days at farthest.

Julia, who did not expect so hasty a Conclusion, received this Intelligence, with so confused a Look, as troubled the Marquis. He feared, he said, she was displeased at his acting so precipitately, and conjured the Countess to consult her Daughter's Inclinations, before she declared the Marriage.

The Countess, who saw thro' his Fears, told him laughing, that she would leave him to sound *Julia's* Inclinations himself; which, when he had done, he might bring her to join the rest of the Company; adding, she had some Letters to read,
which

14 *The RIVAL MOTHER.*

which would soon be dispatched, when, she would immediately come to them.

The Marquis then gave *Julia* his Hand, and following the Advice her Mother had just given him, he had the Happiness to find that she would consent without the least Reluctance.

C H A P. III.

What Arts can blind a jealous Woman's Eyes?

DRYDEN.

THE Countess went far into the Park, and setting down on a Bench, put up against an Espalier of Yoke-Elm, she heard a Voice which was not unknown to her, which induced her to lay aside her Letters, that she might listen attentively. Two or three Words which were uttered, convinced her immediately, that the Voice was the Baron *de Granville's*; at which, her Curiosity and Attention were doubled; and, keeping a profound Silence, she overheard the Baron say, in a low Voice,

What

What Disquietude and Uneasiness have I suffered, my dearest *Felicia*, since our cruel Separation! I have been on the Point of attempting a thousand extravagant Means of seeing you; but the Fear of loosing you forever, deterred me. How difficult it is to conceal a violent Affection! The Countess, your Mother, would certainly have discovered it, if her Vanity had not persuaded her I could love none but her. The Day I was informed of your Illness, I was seized with the most violent Grief; the Countess was moved at it, and attributed my Uneasiness to her Departure, and I saw, by her Looks, to how great a Degree she was grateful on that Account. She is still amiable, and any other than myself, might, perhaps, have taken Advantage of the Offer she seemed to make of her Hand and Heart; but I am ignorant of the Art of Dissimulation. I love you too well, and shall never be enslaved by any other Beauty. I consider her as the Cause of all our Misfortunes. And is not this enough to make me hate her? Scarce had she left

Paris

16 *The RIVAL MOTHER.*

Paris ere I disguised myself like a Peasant, that I might obtain the Liberty of seeing you here; I came without delay to the next adjoining Town; the same Night I asked to speak with the Gardener, and offered to sell him the Seeds of some scarce Flowers, which I caused to be procured at *Paris*, and as I offered them cheap, he determined to buy them. I entered into Conversation with him, and so effectually gained his Confidence, that he desired me to visit him often. Not a Day have I omitted coming to see him, and he has always informed me of the Condition you were in. I have seen you often without daring to approach you, as you were never unaccompanied. Judge then how painful it must have been for me to shun you. At this Moment you appear to me more lovely than ever, I can converse with you without Witnesses, and, if you love me still, my Happiness is compleat.

If I love you, answered *Felicia*, eagerly, can you doubt it? Can you unkindly suppose Absence has made me forget, you are the most amiable of Mankind? No,
my

my dear Baron, nor Time nor Absence can ever prevail over a Heart like mine. Be ever true, and pursue the Design you have formed of engaging the King to demand me of my Mother. She cannot surely deny her Sovereign, and I think you have no other Means left to put an End to our Misfortunes. But, I must bid you adieu, I fear we shall be discovered. Though we now must part, yet I hope we shall again see each other here. Once more farewell, and think of me, for my Thoughts will be solely employed on you.

And will you go, said Mr. de *Granville* to her, and leave me without giving me any other Proofs of your Affection, than bare Assurances you will love me ever? What can you ask more, replied *Felicia*, ought you not to be satisfied with the Opinion I have of you? For Heaven's Sake let me go for I cannot possibly stay any longer.

Felicia departed that Moment, when the Countess heard the Baron say, and will you fly me my dear *Felicia*? Alas, how wretched you make me!

This

This Conversation appeared very tedious to the Countess, she was tempted several Times to have interrupted it ; but thought it more prudent to contain herself, and keep the Adventure secret, that she might, with the greater Certainty, execute a Scheme she had projected. She had long had a private Aversion to *Felicia*, because she had stolen from her several of her Admirers : It may be readily imagined that her Hatred was redoubled, when she found this lovely Girl was once more her Rival. She was enraged to find she had been deceived by her, and that she had not sooner discovered the Commerce between her and the Baron, who now appeared to her to be equally culpable, though he had never once told her he loved her ; but she flattered herself he had a Passion for her, and his gallant Behaviour occasioned her to believe that which was not real. She had made Advances to him, which he feigned not to perceive, with no other Design than as a Cover to the Love he bore her Daughter. And was not this sufficient to transport her with Rage against him ?

She

She stayed some Time in the Park, in order to calm the Agitation she was in. When she thought herself in a Condition to appear, she joined the Company, and no one perceived the Confusion which filled her Mind, for being a perfect Mistress of the Art of Dissembling, she appeared to be extremely chearful, and declared the intended Marriage of the Marquis *de Blefemont* and her eldest Daughter.

This News, which was quite unexpected, excited a Joy, which manifested itself in the Behaviour of every one present, during the whole Night.

The Marquis sent for Musicians and all Things necessary for a Ball, at which were present, most of the Ladies and Gentlemen of the Neighbourhood, whom he had invited.

The Marquis *de Blefemont*, and *Julia*, after a magnificent Supper, opened the Ball; the Company was brilliant; a Satisfaction appeared in the Marquis's Countenance, which plainly shewed how highly sensible he was of the Happiness he was about to enjoy; and in the Face of the
fair

20 *The* RIVAL MOTHER.

fair *Julia*, sat Modesty, but without the least Tincture of Sadness; the Company thought her charming, and she really was so.

All her Features were regular, and accompanied with a thousand inexpressible Graces; she was tall and well shaped, and danced and walked admirably well. Her Hair was Brown, and her Eyes, which were dark-coloured, appeared rather languishing than lively: I should never have done, if I should go about particularly to describe her every Beauty. In a Word, she was formed to please even the most discerning Eye. Her internal Perfections did not in the least fall short of her external Beauties; she was good-natured, affable, and sincere, and joined to those Qualities a great share of Wit and Delicacy. Her Look was usually grave, but she immediately appeared chearful, when, her Thoughts were taken off by Diversions, or entertaining Company.

Felicia, tho' not so handsom, might well pass for one of the prettiest Women in the World; she was not so tall as her
Sister,

Sister, her Waist was small, and her Shape so well proportioned, that the smallest Defect did not appear in it. She was naturally graceful in all her Actions; her black, lively, and speaking Eyes, gave her a spirited Look, but far from any appearance of Boldness, which made her adorable. Her Hair was of the same Color as her Sisters, and curled without the help of Art. Her Face was round, her Nose a little aquiline, and her Mouth, which was rather large than small, was delicate; she had fine Teeth, a beautiful Neck, and a perfectly fair Complexion. Her Character was different from her Sister's; however, she was not deficient either in good Nature or Gentleness. But she was of so lively a Disposition, that she often followed the first Impressions, without considering whether they were consonant to Reason. Reflection came afterwards, and made her sometimes repent what she had done without due Consideration: This probably deterred her from communicating her Thoughts to any Person whatsoever, for she would have been ashamed to have appeared

22 *The RIVAL MOTHER.*

peared more Precipitate than Prudent: Her Wit was delicate, and her Heart susceptible of Love.

As *Julia* and her Sister were Mistresses of so many Perfections, we need not doubt but they were the greatest Ornaments of the Ball. The Ladies, who are commonly jealous of the Praises bestowed on their own Sex, could not help owning that they merited them. It is true they did it in such a Manner as plainly shewed how greatly vexed they were at not having obtained the Prize of Beauty themselves; but, spight of that secret Envy amongst them, they were very Gay and Chearful. Several Persons masqued came in, and amongst others the Baron *de Granville*, in the Dress of a Gipsy; he told some of the Ladies their Fortune in so witty a manner, that he was soon surrounded by several Persons, who greatly perplexed him. The Countess was one of the most curious, she narrowly viewed, and soon found out who he was.

Felicia, whose Hand he had pressed when he approached her, knew him the
Moment

Moment she saw his Eyes; but she could not find the means of speaking to him, for she was continually watched by the Countess, who enjoyed the malicious Satisfaction of perceiving her Daughter mortified at it.

About three of the Clock in the Morning, News was brought to the Marquis, that the Chevalier *de Blefemont* was arrived; at which he was greatly chagrined, for he knew his Cousin's Character, and feared he would be guilty of some Folly, which might interrupt their Mirth.

It may not be improper, in this Place, to give some Account of the Chevalier.

He was about forty Years old, thick, and of a middling Stature, his Face was flat, and much pitted with the Small-pox, and his Eyes were hollow, and almost hid by two black bushy Eyebrows, which joined together. A rough, blunt Behaviour appeared through the thin Covering of an affected Country Politeness. He freely indulged a Love for Wine; and, in the Fits of Madness, which that Liquor occasioned,

24 *The* RIVAL MOTHER.

caſioned, was capable of any Extravagance. He was very wicked, artful, and diſſembling, and was, beſides, inſupportably covetous. He had quitted the Army about ten Years, and lived in an old decayed Caſtle, by the Sea-ſide, about fifty Leagues from *Paris*. There he ſpent half the Day in Hunting, and on his return, uſually paſſed great part of the Night at the Table, with five or ſix Associates, whoſe Appearance and Behaviour were not calculated to give one a very favourable Opinion of the Nobility of that Province.

Such a Man was the Chevalier *de Bleſemont*. His Couſin went to receive him, and acquainted him, in few Words, with the Reſolution he had formed of Marrying the Counteſs *de Salens*'s eldeſt Daughter. This was diſagreeable News to the Chevalier, who depended upon enjoying the Marquis's Eſtate. However, with a forced Smile, he wiſhed him Joy; but could not help ſignifying to him at the ſame Time, he thought it a little too late in Life for him, to enter into ſuch an Engagement: And, ruſhing into the Ball-Room, with a
Bold-

Boldness and indelicacy peculiar to himself, asked the Marquis which of the Ladies, was to be his Cousin? The Marquis introducing him to *Julia*, he saluted her very familiarly, sat down by her, praised her Beauty, and pitied her for being fated to marry the Baron; hinted to her, that he, who was a younger Man, would be a more suitable Match for her, and told her, with her Leave, he would ask her Mother's Consent. This Discourse was very displeasing to *Julia*, who changed her Place several times, to rid herself of her new Lover, but to no Purpose, since he did not cease persecuting her the whole Night.

The Marquis perceiving how very uneasy the Chevalier's Behaviour had made her, civilly desired his Cousin not to give her any farther Disturbance. Oh, ho! replied he, you are jealous, are you? e'faith I am glad I have found it out, tho', since I shall take care to cure you of that mean-spirited Quality. Why you must reconcile yourself, Man, to the hearing civil Things said to your Mistress! 'Tis the Mode, in the polite World; therefore, do not think

of taking Umbrage at any Thing I shall say, or do to my dear Cousin there ; whom I positively insist upon not leaving, for the deuce take me, if I don't think her a charming Creature.

These Words would certainly have provoked the Marquis, if the Countess had not taken him aside, and desired him to overlook the Behaviour of the Chevalier, who appeared to her, she said, to be a very Brute. Here luckily, the Ball ended, and all the Company retired.

The Baron *de Granville* could bid adieu to *Felicia* only with his Eyes; that young Lady gave him a tender Look, and went with *Julia*, and the Marquis, to the Countess's Apartment, where she told him she thought the Chevalier was a bad Man, and that the Marriage must be concluded with all possible Speed.

The Marquis was of the same Opinion; he asked *Julia* a thousand Pardons for the Chevalier's rude Behaviour, and after having kissed her Hand, retired, that he might leave her to her Repose.

C H A P. IV.

Cowards have Courage when they fear not Death.

DRYDEN.

THE Countess sent away her Daughters to their Chamber, but instead of going to Bed, she wrote a Letter to one *Dufour*, who had been a Lieutenant in her late Husband's Regiment; and knowing him to be an enterprizing Man, and entirely devoted to her Service, she commanded him instantly to take a Post-Chaise, and to come, well accompanied, about Six of the Clock in the Evening, to a part of the Forest which she described to him, to carry off by Force, *Felicia*, who would be with her, and to conduct her to a Castle which she had at the farther End of *Brittany*, there to deliver her into the Hands of a Person whose Fidelity she could depend upon. And, above all, she enjoined him inviolable Secrecy, and promised him a suitable Recompence for his Service. She then wrote to the Keeper of the Castle and his Wife; the Husband had been her Father's Valet de Chambre,

28 *The RIVAL MOTHER.*

and the Wife her Nurse. She knew they were both of them base and selfish, she therefore ordered, that on *Felicia's* arrival, they should forthwith lock her up in one of the Towers of the Castle; that they should be careful to furnish her with all the Necessaries of Life, but should not suffer her to go out, or speak to any Person, and that their Fortune depended upon the Punctuality with which they should execute her Orders.

Having sealed her Letter, she sent it by an express Messenger to *Dufour*, who lived at *Paris*. This Expedient the Countess chose preferable to any other, since she knew the Baron had Friends enough at Court, easily to obtain the King's Order for his taking *Felicia* from the Convent, (should she confine her there) and marrying her. She, therefore, had no other Means left of keeping her from him; the Place of her Confinement being unknown, and the Steps, she should pretendedly take to discover where she was, would prevent all Suspicion.

Having

Having fixed this Contrivance, she went to Bed; her Daughters went to Bed also; but *Felicia* did not mention a Word to *Julia* of her Interview with the Baron, she having even concealed from her, their mutual Affection.

About two a-Clock, in the Afternoon, all the Company arose, they sat down to Table, and after Dinner several Parties were made for Cards. The Chevalier insisted upon playing only with *Julia*, and put on the same kind of Behaviour he began at the Ball.

The Hour for Walking being come, *Felicia* depended upon finding a Moment to speak with the Baron *de Granville*, by leaving the Company under pretence of finishing a Book which she begun reading the Evening before; but the Countess told her so much Reading was hurtful to her, and it would be better to take a little Exercise; and she immediately ordered an old Knight of St. *Lewis*, who was lately become her humble Admirer, to wait upon her.

30 *The RIVAL MOTHER.*

They walked till Supper-time. *Julia*, before she sat down to Table, went into her Chamber to undress, and her Maid had but just taken off her Stays, when the Chevalier entering her Room, took her in his Arms, which so terribly frightened her, that she screamed out aloud.

The Marquis not being far off, heard her Cry, and entered Time enough to be Witness to the Chevalier's Behaviour.

He was enraged at it, and casting a furious Look at him, desir'd him to quit the Room. Then turning to *Julia*, who stood trembling with the Fright, he told her how greatly he was concerned for his Cousin's Impertinence, and leaving her, went to the Chevalier, who had retired to his Chamber.

He there sharply reproved him for his Folly, and the latter answering roughly, the Marquis lost all Patience, and drew upon him; but the Chevalier said to him, put up your Sword, this is not a proper Time to take Revenge for the Injuries you pretend I have done; at the least Noise Company will interpose, who will part us.

At

At Night, when Sleep has closed the Eyes of every one in the Castle, I shall expect you, unaccompanied, at the Entrance of the Forest, where you will find me prepared to dispute with you the Possession of the Lady; for I must confess to you that I love her, and will sooner lose my Life than see her yours. Return then, and to prevent any Suspicion, say, I have given Orders for my departure, and that I shall set out this very Night.

The Marquis, who was persuaded the Chevalier would disturb his Quiet, and besides, not being able to forgive the abusive Language he had made use of, promised to be in the Forest at the Time appointed; and then returned to the Parlor, where Supper was upon the Table.

He could not conceal his Uneasiness during the whole Supper time, they enquired the Cause of it; and he said it was occasioned by some warm Words which had passed between him and his Cousin; but that his Disquietude would be of short duration, since the Chevalier would be gone in a Moment or two. The Account

he gave was credited, and all the Company were very easy. After Supper the Marquis waited on the Countess to her Chamber, and *Julia* followed them.

After a short Conversation, the Marquis sent for a Casket, which he opened, and presented to *Julia*. It contained Thirty Thousand Livres in Money; and Jewels, which had belonged to his Mother, to the Value of Fifty Thousand Crowns. He requested *Julia* to wear them for the future, and keep them for his Sake. He afterwards asked Permission to embrace her, and left her with Tears in his Eyes.

The Countess who perceived it, with great Astonishment, asked him the Cause of his Grief? He told her he was greatly vexed at the shameful Part his Cousin had acted. But no sooner had he retired, than the Countess, who was not satisfied with his Answer, sent to know if the Chevalier was gone away, and whether the Marquis was returned to his Chamber?

Word was brought her back, that the Chevalier had set out two Hours before, and that the Marquis was in Bed.

Upon

Upon this Report she went to Rest, and *Julia*, tho' a little Uneasy, did the like.

Felicia, who had no Inclination to Sleep, told her Sister the Moon shone so charmingly Bright, that she would look out of the Window, and listen to the warbling Nightingales, who in the Woods, made a Concert she was infinitely delighted with.

And indeed she staid there more than an Hour, hoping that the Baron, who had not found Means of speaking to her, since their Conversation in the Arbor, would have contrived a Way to stay in the Castle, and attempted to have had a short Interview with her. But in vain did she cast her Eyes around, he did not appear.

As she was upon the Point of retiring she heard a great Noise upon the Staircase, and saw several Servants go into the Garden, who ran towards a little Gate which opened upon the Forest. Having perceived the Countess's Foot-

34 *The RIVAL MOTHER.*

man, she called him, and asked whither he was going in such a Hurry ?

The Servant answered, that a Peasant who was dangerously wounded, had just informed them that the Marquis *de Blese-mont* was lying, at the Entrance of the Forest, stabbed in several Places.

This Information made *Felicia* tremble from Head to Foot, she waked her Sister and acquainted her with what had happened, then ran to the Countess's Chamber to tell her the melancholy News.

The Countess immediately arose, and, with her Daughters, went down to a spacious Portico adjoining to the Gardens. The first Spectacle that offered to their View was the Baron *de Granville* in the Habit of a Peasant, and extended on a Bank, where he was just expiring thro' the great Quantity of Blood he lost.

What a terrible Sight was this to the Countess and *Felicia*, and what Cause of amazement to *Julia* ? The first of whom forgot in an Instant all her Displeasure against the Baron, and terrified at the Condition he was then in, she approached him

him that she might try to stop the Blood, which flowed abundantly from the Wounds he had received.

Felicia concluding that the Baron was either dead or dying, grew pale and cold, and sinking down on a Seat, continued there some Time like one deprived of Motion.

Julia, under the greatest Uneasiness and Confusion, ran every where to call for Help; she was likewise greatly alarmed at the dangerous Situation she knew the Marquis was in (for whom she had a real Esteem) she look'd about in Hopes to see some Person returning who might inform her how things really were; when she soon saw the Marquis himself, carried by his Servants, but in a most deplorable Condition: He was senseless, and the broken Blade of a Sword was still sticking in his Body. *Julia*, who was naturally compassionate, could not help shedding Tears at the little Probability she saw of his living. She conjured the Surgeon, who had been sent for, to take all possible Care of him.

One

36 *The RIVAL MOTHER.*

One may say that she alone was concerned for the Marquis, the Countess and *Felicia* were solely employed about the Baron *de Granville*, with this Difference, however, that the latter dared not shew her Grief, and the Countess gave Proofs of it every Moment. She had compassed to stop the Blood, and had caused him to be carried into a Chamber not far from her own. She also caused his Wounds to be dressed, and heard, to her great Comfort, that they were not dangerous.

As she was now somewhat easy about the Baron, she went to the Marquis to enquire how he did. *Felicia* snatching that Moment, approached the Bed of the Baron, took his Hand, gently pressed it, and being unable to utter a Word, she gave him a Look which plainly spoke how greatly she was grieved.

The Baron was so charmed at the Sight of his dear *Felicia*, that spight of his Weakness, he attempted to raise himself in his Bed, and kiss her Hand, but his Strength failed him. *Felicia* intreated him to lie
still

still, and departed under the greatest Affliction.

As it was necessary the Marquis and the Baron should be kept very quiet, and as there were several Servants to attend them, the Ladies retired to their Chambers, though they did not go to Bed, but passed the Night under the greatest Anxiety.

They readily concluded that the Marquis had been wounded by the Chevalier, but could not conceive how the Baron *de Granville* became engaged in the Dispute. To have that Matter cleared up, they must have asked one or the other of them, and they were not in a Condition to tell them.

C H A P. V.

*We'll mock the Time with fairest show,
Fair Face must hide what the false Heart doth know.*
SHAKESPEAR.

THE next Day all the Friends and Neighbours of the Marquis being in-

informed of the Misfortune that had happened, came to enquire after his Health ; and several of them stayed at the Castle. Some eminent Physicians and Surgeons, whom the Countess had sent for from *Paris*, arrived there also. Whilst they were employed about the Marquis and the Baron, The Countess seeing the Hour approach, which she had agreed on with *Dufour*, for the carrying off *Felicia*, told her Daughters she was inclined to take a Walk, in hopes of getting rid of a Pain in her Head, which she had felt for sometime, and desired them to accompany her. They walked towards the Forest, but *Julia* and *Felicia*, who were afraid of going to that Place where the Marquis had lately been so dangerously wounded, entreated the Countess to go some other Way ; but she made a jest of their Fears, and insensibly drew them to the very Spot mentioned in her Letter to *Dufour*, and which was a very solitary unfrequented Place.

The Countess was scarce arrived there, when the faithful Executor of her Designs
ap-

appeared with three Companions, and the Post-Chaise.

The Countess having viewed them, and pretending to be afraid, told her Daughters they were very ill-looking Men, and that she would return to the Castle. Then taking each of them by the Arm, she walked slow enough to give the Fellows an Opportunity of getting off their Horses, and seizing *Felicia*. When immediately *Dufour* forced her into the Chaise, and departed that Instant, spight of the seeming Grief and feigned Tears of the Countess.

Julia, who was sincerely grieved at this Violence committed on her Sister, used her utmost Efforts to prevent it; But what could a Woman do against three Men well armed? She therefore proposed to the Countess, of flying immediately to the Marquis's House, and alarming the Family, to induce them to pursue the Ravishers. But the Countess, with a View of giving them more Time to gain Ground, and afraid they should be pursued, sunk down upon the Grass as if she had fainted away,

away, and thereby retained *Julia* about her as long as she thought would enable *Dufour* to get off. She then pretended to recover, and softly returned to the Castle, where she, to a Miracle acted the Part of an afflicted Mother.

Part of the Company mounted on Horseback, in Hopes of overtaking her Daughter, but she sent them a contrary Road to that which she knew the others had taken.

After this Precaution, she became more easy in her Mind, and was disquieted only on account of the wounded Persons. On Inquiry, she was told they had both of them a violent Fever; she proposed seeing them, but was forbid by the Physicians, who assured her it was absolutely necessary they should be kept very still, and that if she had the least regard for their Health, she must postpone her Visit for some Days.

This seemed an Age to the Countess, who was desirous of being continually with the Baron *de Granville*. She ordered not a Word should be mentioned either to him or the Marquis, of *Felicia's* being

being carried off; because she said, in their present Condition, great Care must be taken to avoid giving them any Uneasiness. And every Moment did she send to their Chambers to enquire how they did.

At the End of four Days she was told the Patients were now in a very fair Way, and she might pay them a Visit, she went therefore immediately to see the Marquis, accompanied by the mournful *Julia*.

The Marquis received them with all the Joy he was capable of expressing. The Countess having enquired about his Health, asked him if he knew any of the Villains who had endeavoured to take away his Life?

The Marquis seeing several Persons around his Bed, told her what she had already heard from the Physician and Surgeons; and added to it, that not being able to sleep after he had taken Leave of her, he went out to walk, as he had frequently done before, when the Nights were fine, and the Season extremely hot.

That he entered the Forest, and was suddenly attacked by four Men unknown to

42 *The RIVAL MOTHER.*

to him; that they wounded him in five Places, before he could put himself in a Posture of Defence; that the Baron *de Granville*, who was accidentally there, had saved his Life, perhaps at the Expence of his own. I was informed, continued the Marquis, that this young Gentleman being a Hunting, with three of his Friends, in the Neighbourhood of my Estate, had been told I was to give a Ball; that not being acquainted with me, or able to procure a Masquerade Dress, he had changed Clothes with a Peasant in his Retinue, and came alone to the Ball, it being impossible for his Friends to accompany him, because they were obliged to attend that Evening at the King's Couchée; that he came alone, and without Attendants, and so soon as he entered the Ball-Room, he was seized with the Head-ach and a shivering Fit, occasioned, without Doubt, by the Heat and the Fatigue he had undergone in Hunting the whole Day; that his Indisposition had obliged him to retire, and go to the Gardener's, where he staid till the Fit was over; that he went out

in order to take a Post-Chaise, but hearing a Noise, he came to his Assistance, and defended him with a Stick, the only Weapon he had to parry the Thrusts made at him. The Marquis added, that the Baron *de Granville* had, at first, driven off those Fellows, with great Courage, but, that at last, he was wounded himself, and they must both have perished, if a Whistle, given by some Person, had not obliged those Wretches to run away.

After this Account, the Marquis finding the Persons in the Chamber were now out of hearing, owned to the Countess, the real Design which led him to the Forest; and told her he had not the least Doubt, but that the Chevalier *de Blefemont*, (whom he knew had neither Honour nor Honesty) had prevailed on his Servants to assassinate him, without running any Risk himself. He told her also, he was convinced the Chevalier was not far from the Scene of Action. And that probably he called off his Blood-hounds, by a Whistle, for fear some Persons in the Castle, should discover the Authors of so base an Attempt.

The

44 *The* RIVAL MOTHER.

The Marquis's Conjectures of the Treachery and Baseness of the Chevalier, seem'd to the Countess so well founded, that she was convinced, she said, it could be no other, and heartily congratulated him upon his Escape from so wicked a Man.

Would to Heaven, said the Marquis, with a Sigh, I may never set Eyes on him again, but he loves the fair *Julia* (on whom the Marquis cast a tender Look) and that Love which he has dared avow to me, makes me fear some greater Misfortune.

The Countess told him she would leave her Daughter with him, to dissipate his melancholy Ideas, whilst she should go and visit the Baron *de Granville*, who was intitled to that Mark of her Respect, for having saved the Life of a Son-in-Law, whom she infinitely loved and esteemed.

When she entered the Baron's Chamber, she found him in a profound Reverie, and heard him say, how unhappy am I, she is snatched away from me, and I am compelled to stay here. From these few Words, the Countess found he knew *Felicia* was no longer at *Blesmont*, and she was the
more

more confirmed in it, as she saw the Gardener go out of his Apartment.

The Baron had engaged this Man to befriend him, and had prevailed on him to propagate, in the Castle, the invented Story of the Hunting and Ball, that his coming to the Marquis's, disguised like a Peasant, might not appear extraordinary. The Gardener gave him a particular Account of all that passed at the Marquis's, so that the Countess did not mistake, in supposing he had informed the Baron of *Felicia's* being carried off. She withdrew out of the Chamber without being observed, and sat down to write a Letter, in which she counterfeited *Felicia's* Hand.

Being persuaded, that by Means of this Paper, she should be able to efface, or at least greatly diminish the Love which he bore to *Felicia*; she returned to his Chamber, and regardless, whether she interrupted the deep Thoughtfulness, in which he was then buried, she approached his Bed, and being alone with him, said a thousand civil Things, of the Hopes she entertained to see his Health soon, and perfectly restored;

46 *The RIVAL MOTHER.*

stored; informed him of the great Disquietude she had suffered, ever since the fatal Moment she saw him ready to breathe his last; related to him the Surprize she had been under to see him at *Blesmont*, in a Dress so different from his own; and at last hinted to him, that she flattered herself it was on her Account he had visited the Marquis.

The Baron, who was persuaded she had not the least Knowledge of his Love for *Felicia*, did not think proper to free her from an Error, which seemed so pleasing to her; however as he could not prevail on himself to feign a Passion for the Countess, he answered her in ambiguous Terms, which she very well comprehended, but seemed to put a different Interpretation upon.

Assuming then a melancholy Air, which did not appear counterfeited, she said, after having confessed to you, my dear Baron, the Joy I feel to see you again, I cannot conceal from you a Grief I have lately suffered.

You

You know my Daughters; you know my great Tendernefs for them, and the Pains I have taken in their Education, to infpire them with Sentiments worthy the Stock they fpring from; you are not ignorant, that fearing to expofe them to inevitable Dangers, by bringing them too foon into Company, I kept them as retired at home, as if they had lived in a Nunnery; wherein, indeed, they would have been placed during their Infancy, if Mr. *de Salens*, their Father, (who loved them for his own Gratification, and without due Regard to their Intereft) had not prevented it, and I fhould not at this Time have been a Prey to the moft exquisite Grief a Mother can feel.

Felicia, my youngeft Daughter, whom I thought Prudent and Virtuous, is not fo; it pains me to own to you, that ſhe loves, nay, desperately loves a Man, whoſe low Birth, and want of Merit, renders her Folly inexcufable. In ſhort, Baron, ſhe loves *La Grange*, the Valet, whom I turned away about a Month ago: He had the Affurance to come after her to this Place,

48 *The RIVAL MOTHER.*

Place, and between them they contrived a pretended Rape, which I have hitherto concealed from you, in consideration of the great Concern you have for my Welfare in all Respects; I therefore avoided making you Witness to an Affliction, which, would have so sensibly touched you, as must have retarded your Recovery.

What do I hear, Madam, cryed the Baron, who, during the Countess's Words had often changed Countenance, do you not consider that you are accusing *Felicia* of the most shameful Action in the World? Do you think her capable of entertaining Sentiments so much beneath her? No, no, Madam, added he, with great Emotion, *Felicia* is not guilty, and tho' I am not so happy as to know her thoroughly, I would answer for her Virtue; you have too hastily trusted to Appearances; for Heaven's sake, Madam, do but calmly consider, and I am convinced you will be sensible of the Injustice you do your amiable Daughter.

Tho'

Though the Countess had not been apprised of the Baron's Sentiments, the Warmth with which he defended *Felicia*, would have too plainly shewed his Passion for her.

You do not credit then, said she, what I tell you? If so, Sir, continued that artful Woman, I must lay before you full Proof of my Misfortune. I saw *Legrange* with my Daughter; saw him take her Hand and kiss it with Transport; this determined me, so suddenly, to turn that Servant away, and send her with the utmost Expedition, to a Monastery: But if this is not enough to convince you, take and read that Letter, which I saw fall out of the Pocket, of one of the Wretches, who assisted in the Flight of that disobedient Girl, and see if I judge only from Appearances! The Baron *de Granville* took the Letter, with a trembling Hand, the Character appeared to him so like *Felicia's*, that he did not doubt it was hers: He read it, and it contained as follows.

‘ **H**OW difficult it is, dear *Legrange*, to hide one’s Sentiments, when they are so tender and lively, like mine. My Mother has discovered my Love for you, I leave to you to judge of her Fury; and indeed, her Design is to confine me in a Monastery, during my whole Life. What will become of me, if I must never see you more? I know but of two Methods to shield me from that Misfortune; the one to prevail on your Rival, to obtain an Order from the King, to demand my Mother’s Consent to marry him, which I mention’d to him a few Days ago; for hither he privately came, guided by his Love, which suggested to him the Means of procuring a few Moments Conversation with me, in spite of my pitiless Argus. If he obtains me, and I doubt not but he will, we may, by the help of proper Precautions, see each other often, for I think he is not jealous. The second Method would please me better; but to carry that into Execution, my dear *Legrange*, Courage and Love are necessary,
both

both which you possess; therefore I flatter myself, you will, with Pleasure, follow the Advice I have given you, of carrying me off. You may conduct me, to that pretty, little Retirement, where, as you have often, fondly told me, you should be charmed to pass your Life with me: I shall take Care to provide Money enough to furnish us with the Means of living comfortably. I am not very ambitious; and any Station, with my dear *Legrange*, will make me truly happy. Do not fail then to come, for several Days, about six a-Clock, in the Evening, to the main Walk, in the Forest, attended by two or three, trusty Friends, with a Post-Chaise, and I will be there: This last Expedient I am resolved on. Adieu then, and be not the least uneasy about your Rival, for I hate him; and I have kept up Appearances with him, only as I judged he might be subservient to the Design I have formed, of being never separated from you.'

FELICIA.

The Baron was so affected, at the reading this Letter, he was not able to conceal the various Emotions of Fury and Indignation it produced in him; and the Countess had the Satisfaction to see, that her Deceit had produced the wished-for Effect. She pretended not to perceive the Agitation he was in, and with Tears in her Eyes, conjured him to keep the Adventure secret, assuring him, that she had not so much as mentioned it to the Marquis, or *Julia*. She afterwards informed him, that *Felicia*, before her Flight, had broke open a Casket, which the Marquis had given to *Julia*, the very Night he was wounded, and had taken from thence Money and Jewels to a considerable Value. That her Daughter *Julia*, tho' struck with Amazement at the Theft, would not accuse her, but owned that no one but her Sister could have come at the Casket.

The Countess, who had, herself, taken away the Gold and Jewels, that she might accuse *Felicia* of it, exaggerated the heinousness of the Crime, with so great a shew of Sincerity, that the Baron, who could not suspect

suspect any one capable of inventing so base a Slander, could not help saying, he thought her very unfortunate, in giving Birth to such a Monster as *Felicia*.

She then withdrew, not in reality to hide the Tears, she pretended she could not contain, but, to enjoy the Satisfaction she felt, at the Success of her Stratagem. However, one single Circumstance made her uneasy; she had charged *Legrange* with carrying off her Daughter, and feared he might accidentally come to the Sight of the Baron, and discover the Falsity of the Accusation. But all succeeded to her Wish, *Legrange*, whom she had turned off, only on account of his refusing to marry the antiquated *Desburs*, her Favourite, was sailed to the Indies, to take Possession of an Estate, which had belonged to his Brother, who died without Children.



C H A P. VI.

*What ! shall Semanthe triumph in my Spoils ?
 Shall she enjoy him all, while I stand wishing,
 And, like a Spirit damn'd, am robb'd of Hope ?
 O Hell ! it mads my Reason but to think on't !
 I shall become their May-game :
 At their lose Intervals of calmer Love
 She'll hang upon his Lips, and beg him tell
 The Story of my Passion o'er again !
 Which he relates ; and with a scornful Smile
 Adds to my Shame, to make the Girl more vain.*

SOUTHERNE.

WHEN the Baron was alone, he gave full Scope to the Horror, caused by his melancholy Reflections, and thinking himself deceived and despised, by the Person he so tenderly loved, he loaded her with Reproaches, as if she had been present. Tho' he was fully persuaded she was highly culpable, yet he found she was still dear to him : He would willingly have parted with his Life, to have found her Innocent ; but her Writing, which he compared with several Copies of Verses, in his Custody, which, he had seen her transcrib

scribe with her own Hand; the Language contained in that fatal Letter, which was the very same she made use of in the Wood, the Night he conversed with her there, as he thought, unheard and unobserved; the unworthy Rival she had preferred to him, all concurred to inflame his Anger so much, that he was firmly persuaded he now hated her, to as great a Degree, as before he had loved her.

He formed the Resolution to think of her no more, and for the future to shun Womankind, as Monsters repugnant to the Peace of Life.

Such a Conduct, he thought, might enable him to live happy, and he wished to be in a Condition of getting up, only that he might retire to an Estate he had, near *Lyons*, secluded from the rest of the World.

He did not impart his Resolution to any one, and affected to appear more undisturbed than he really was. He told the Countess, that as the Marquis *de Blefemont* grew better every Day, and would soon be in a Condition to espouse her Daughter,

he desired she would permit him to be present at the Nuptials.

The Countess, whose Love had taken deeper Root, from her continually seeing him, was delighted to find he had no Thought of going away. She fed herself with the Hopes of totally effacing the unhappy *Felicia*, from his Mind, and of securing her own Conquest, by speedily offering to marry him. Such being her Designs, she neglected nothing, she thought capable, of rendering her amiable, in the Eyes of the Baron; but the Pains she took to please him, were not attended with Success, for, spight of his Resolves, his Mind run only on the Charms of *Felicia*, her Ingratitude, and her Flight.

These Reflections, sometimes, gave him so gloomy an Air, that the Countess was alarmed at it.

Julia, who never suspected he had the least Inclination for her Sister, often rallied him on account of his melancholy Humour, and he, in return, took the same Freedom with her.

There

There is surely a wide difference, said she, between you and me; I cannot see that you have any Cause to be troubled; but, for my part, I have great Reason to be afflicted, since I know not what is become of a Sister I tenderly love. *Julia* could never mention her dear Sister without shedding Tears, and when she did it in the presence of the Baron, he sighed, but returned her no Answer,

The Marquis, who had been informed, since he was grown better, of *Felicia's* being carried away, had wrote, and dispatched Messengers every way, to get Intelligence of her, but to no Purpose. *Dufour* having obliged her to travel Day and Night, thro' bye Roads.

The Marquis being now perfectly cured of his Wounds, and the Baron well enough to walk in the Garden, the Marriage of *Julia*, with the former, was soon to be celebrated, and only *Felicia* was wanting to restore Joy in the Castle.

The Calm which began to diffuse itself there, was, however, but of short duration; the Countess, who saw the Advances

she made to the Baron, had not met with the Reception she wished, resolved at last to tell him, without reserve, that she loved him, and that it rested with him, whether he would be Master of the Riches she possessed, by joining their Hands.

The Day before she was to set out for *Paris*, to buy Things proper for her Daughter's Wedding, she arose sooner than usual, and sent to the Baron's Chamber to know if he was stirring, and to desire he would come to her Apartment, she having something of great Consequence to communicate to him.

Desburs, who was sent on the Message, went there, but not finding him, she searched the Garden, the Wood, and even the Entrance of the Forest, and all other Places, where she thought she might meet him, but her Hopes were vain. She returned therefore, and told her Mistress the Baron must be certainly vanished, for she had sought him every where, to no purpose.

This Information of her Favourite greatly perplexed her, she immediately sent for one of the Marquis's Footmen,
who

who had attended the Baron, ever since he was wounded, and asked what was become of him?

The young Man answered, he went away about three o'Clock in the Morning, without suffering his Attendance, or informing him whither he was going; that he had only given him a Letter for his Master, which he had just delivered to him.

The Countess terribly vexed at the unexpected Departure of the Baron, went to the Marquis's Chamber, and desired to know the Contents of a Letter, she heard he had just received. Here it is, Madam, said the Marquis, read it; and you will see that the Baron *de Granville* labours under some secret Uneasiness, which has occasioned him to leave us. She took the Letter, and read as follows.

S I R,

A Violent Grief, with which I am oppressed, and which I have put a Force upon myself to conceal, obliges me to depart hence: And my Fears, lest I
should

should be unable to resist the ingaging Manner, with which, you, as it were, compel every one to remain under your hospitable Roof, prevented me from thanking you by Word of Mouth, for the many Favours I received from you, during my Abode in your Castle. Permit me, therefore, to bid you adieu; pity, I entreat you, a miserable Man, who, if possible, would fly even from himself; and be assured, I shall perfectly esteem you, during my whole Life: I beg you will ask, in my Name, a thousand Pardons, of the Countess and her amiable Daughter, for my abrupt Departure, without waiting on them.'

GRANVILLE.

The reading this Letter gave the Countess a full View of her unhappy Condition; she now found the Baron could never love her, and that all she had done, to give him a frightful Idea of *Felicia*, would tend only to make him wretched, without lessening his Affection.

This Thought augmented her Hatred to her Daughter, and threw her into a
Pen;

Penfiveness, which plainly shewed the Condition she was in; she was herself sensible of it, and to prevent a Discovery of the real Cause of her Grief, she pretended to the Marquis, that she was just seized with a Swimming in the Head, occasioned by some Bergamot-Water, with which she had sprinkled her Chamber, which Perfume never failed to occasion such an Effect. She added, that some *English* Salts, which she always carried about her, were an infallible Remedy in the like Cases, and she immediately applied them to her Noftrils.

Assuming afterwards a gay, chearful Air, she talked of the Baron, said, she was sorry he had left them so abruptly, without informing them whither he was going; that however she greatly pitied him, though he had made so great a Mystery of his Sufferings, and that, in all Probability, he must have taken a very sudden Resolution of quitting them.

The Countess then changing the Conversation, stayed a few Moments more with the Marquis; But unable longer to
con-

tain herself, she went into her Closet, there to give a free Course to her Tears, which she had, with great Difficulty, kept from flowing.

Julia, who saw her pass by, and plainly perceived the great Alteration in her Countenance, would have gone into her Apartment, and begged to have been informed if any thing had fallen out to make her uneasy. But the Countess sent her Word she would be alone, that however, she might go with *Desburs*, to the Marquis, and she would come to them presently.

Julia obeyed, and finding the Marquis alone, she asked him, whilst *Desburs* stood at a Distance at the Window, if he was acquainted with the Reasons for the Countess's being so afflicted? The Marquis then informed her of the Baron's Departure, and related the Conversation that had passed between him and her Mother; he told her also, that in all Appearance, the Absence of the Baron *de Granville* was the true Cause of her Grief. I have observed, said he, her Looks as well as her

Be-

Behaviour to him, during his short stay here, and am persuaded an Affection for that young Nobleman, occasioned her so ill to brook his precipitate Departure. *Julia* owned she was of the same Opinion, but said she thought the Countess had more Prudence than seriously to enter into an Engagement with a Man so much younger than herself. The Marquis not caring to disclose to *Julia*, his full Sentiments of the Matter, put an End to that Conversation, to begin another of infinitely greater Concern to him; for as he was very shortly to espouse her, that Happiness, which he had so impatiently waited for, furnished him with a thousand Subjects for Conversation.

He spoke to her of his Love, but spoke of it in Moderation. However, he declared to her in the most ample and explicit Terms, how great Pleasure he should take in anticipating her every Wish, and leaving her absolute Mistress of her Actions. *Julia* assured him she would do her utmost, that her Will should, in all Respects, go Hand in Hand with his Desires;

64 *The RIVAL MOTHER.*

fires; at which Time the Countess enter'd the Chamber, with an Air free from the least Appearance of Grief; having gained a few Moments to recover the Trouble and Agitation of her Mind, which sufficed for one so compleat in the Art of Dissimulation.

She told the Marquis she intended to set out the next Day in order to take Measures necessary for the speedy Conclusion of the Marriage: That as he was not in a Condition to bear the Fatigue of a Coach, she would advise him to stay a few Days longer before he undertook the Journey, but that she and her Daughter would depart without Delay. Though the Marquis had not quite recovered his Strength, yet he could not think of letting the Lady go away alone; he therefore accompanied them to *Paris*, where they safely arrived.

C H A P.

C H A P. VII.

*Oh ! for a Curse upon the cunning Priest,
Who conjur'd us together in a Yoke
That galls me now.*

SOUTHERNE.

A Few Days passed in receiving Compliments from the Friends and Acquaintance of the Countess, whose principal Care was, privately to make the strictest Enquiry she could, after the Baron *de Granville*.

The Marquis *de Blefemont*, who was looked upon by every one in the most amiable Light, received many Visits from Persons of the highest Rank and Figure; which, however, did not prevent his paying due Attention to the material Point.

The Marriage Settlement was highly advantageous to *Julia*; the richest Silks were purchased for her, the Marquis furnished a fine House he had in the *Fauxbourg, St. Germain*, (That he might come and pass the Winter there with her) and bought her a most magnificent and
gallant

66 *The RIVAL MOTHER.*

gallant Equipage. In short, the Marquis omitted nothing capable to satisfy a young Lady, on the Point of appearing in the World, and desirous of making a Figure there.

Julia, had a due Sense of these Marks of his Affection. She shewed him her Gratitude in so genteel and courteous a Manner as perfectly enchanted him.

Every thing would have been ready in seven or eight Days Time, and they were preparing for their Return to the Castle, where the Marriage was to be celebrated.

The Marquis *de Blefemont* was desirous of going thither before them, that he might give the necessary Orders, and provide an Entertainment for *Julia*, and the Company who were to be present at the Wedding.

He set out, therefore, three Days before the Time fixed by the Countess for her Departure. The Evening of his Arrival at *Blefemont*, after having made a light Supper, he was seized with a Fever, which obliged him to go to Bed; He flattered himself that it would be of
no

no long Duration; but the next Day it was so greatly increased, he was alarmed at it, and having ordered Pen, Ink, and Paper, to be brought him, he wrote the following Letter, which he sent to the Countess.

MADAM,

SOME Demon, jealous of my Happiness, has again interrupted it, the very Moment I thought it most certain. I begin to fear he is bent on my Destruction: I suffer inexpressible Pains, but my greatest Torment, is to think that there is a Probability, I shall never more behold the amiable *Julia*; and that by being snatched from her, I shall be denied the Satisfaction to see her *Marchioness de Blefemont*. All that I am Master of is hers, I give it her from this Time forth; But I could wish it was made more secure to her, so that after my Death, she might have it in her Power to avoid any Litigation about my Estate. Come hither then, Madam, without Delay, that I may make the most of those Intervals of Reason, which my Disease hath not yet totally

68 *The RIVAL MOTHER.*

tally deprived me of, and to give my Hand to, and conjure your most amiable Daughter, sometimes to call to Remembrance, a Husband who wished to live, only that he might make her happy."

BLESEMONT.

The Countess received this Letter the Moment she was getting into her Coach to set out for *Blesmont*; she shewed it to those who were to have accompanied her, and they were all extremely afflicted at this unlucky Accident. *Julia* was greatly grieved at this new Misfortune; she really esteemed the Marquis; and, if she did not *love* him, she had at least a sincere and tender *Friendship* for him. After having read the foregoing Letter, she produced another from the Marquis's Valet, which informed her that his Master's Distemper was the Purple-Fever, and Small-Pox; that he had avoided acquainting his Master with it for fear of adding Terror to his present Uneasiness, which was very great, though he was not fully sensible of the Danger he was in: That he there-

therefore took the Liberty to tell her she would run a great Risque in coming to *Blesmont*, before two Months were expired, and that he dared assure her, he would take all possible Care of the Marquis during the whole Time; that he was attended by a very good Physician; and finally he promised her, she should receive as exact an Account of his Condition, as if she were at the Castle.

The second Letter made the Countess resolve not to go to *Blesmont*; she was extremely afraid of Malignant Fevers, she therefore sent back her Coach, wrote to the Marquis that he might not be uneasy, told him a slight Indisposition stayed her at *Paris* for some Days, and sent Word to the Valet, that she should be greatly obliged to him for the Care he should take of his Master.

She sent one of her Servants with her Letter to *Blesmont*, and charged him to bring back an Account of the Marquis's Condition.

The Footman, at his Return, informed her that the Marquis was much better;
that

70 *The RIVAL MOTHER.*

that indeed he had not seen him, but that *Lyonnois*, his Valet de Chambre, had assured him of it.

This Answer, in a great Measure, dissipated the Countess's Fears, and determined her to retire to one of her Country-Seats, situate about two Leagues from *Paris*.

As she stood in need of a little Amusement to drive away the melancholy which was occasioned by the Baron's Absence, she carried with her some agreeable Company; and as she was a finished Coquette, the Passion she had for the Baron *de Granville*, did not prevent her endeavouring to divert herself with, and even to please some for whom she had but an indifferent Regard; her sole Intention being to pass the Time of the Marquis's Illness at her Country-House.

Julia, who was continually uneasy, as well on Account that she heard no News of her Sister, as of the Condition the Marquis was then in, quitted *Paris* without the least Regret.

They

They received every other Day, an Account of the Condition of the Marquis *de Blesemont* ; and *Lyonnois* informed them in his last Letter, that no Inconvenience would follow from his Master's Illness, except his being much pitted with the Small-Pox. And, at about the End of six Weeks, the Countess received the following.

MADAM,

‘ I AM now greatly recovered, and expect, with the liveliest Impatience, that you and your lovely Daughter will be pleased to come to Day, and comfort me for what I have undergone. Every thing is ready to receive you, and to celebrate the Marriage, which has been so unfortunately retarded by so many Accidents. I intend the Ceremony shall be performed about two o’Clock in the Morning. You will do me the Favour not to bring any Company with you ; my Reason for which Request, I shall do myself the Honour to explain to you hereafter.”

BLESEMONT.

The

72 *The RIVAL MOTHER.*

The Servant who brought this Letter to the Countess, told her, his Master had so earnest a Desire to see the young Lady, that if she deferred going to *Blesmont* only a Day, it might occasion him to relapse.

The Countess would willingly have stayed some Time longer at her Country House, but the Eagerness the Marquis shewed, induced her to set out for *Paris* directly. And having packed up the principal Things she and *Julia* stood in need of, they departed for the Castle of *Blesmont* alone, agreeable to the Marquis's Request.

It was Eight o'Clock at Night when the Countess and her Daughter arrived at *Blesmont*: *Lyonnois* came to meet them, and said, his Master was not in a Condition to receive them, on Account of a new Indisposition, which prevented his getting up, and that this Accident had induced him to procure a Licence to be married in Bed. The Countess proposed going into his Chamber, but *Lyonnois* intreated her not to do it, assuring her that his Master had taken a Fancy that the
young

young Lady would refuse to marry him, if she had an Opportunity to examine his Face, and see the Havock the Small-Pox had made there, for which Reason he could not venture to be seen till the Ceremony was performed. The Countess, who was terrified at the bare mentioning so dangerous a Distemper, did not persist in her Design of going to his Chamber; but *Julia* seemed piqued, that the Marquis should think her capable of changing her Sentiments.

She declared she would speak to him, to convince him he did not do her Justice, and to assure him, that as she regarded him only on account of his good Qualities, she should think him always worthy her Esteem and Friendship.

You will be soon satisfied, Madam, answered *Lyonnois*, for we every Moment expect the Priest who is to betroth you. And he immediately arrived. He was Minister of the Parish of which the Marquis was Lord. He paid his Compliments to the Countess and her Daughter, who knew him; and after a short Conversation, said

74 *The* RIVAL MOTHER.

it was Time to go to the Marquis, and he led the Way.

Julia, accompanied only by her Maids, and two Persons who called themselves the Marquis's Friends, and who were to be Witnesses, followed the Priest into the Marquis's Chamber. Two Wax-Tapers placed on a marble Table, at a Distance from the Bed, gave but a dim Light. The Bed Curtains were almost close drawn, and prevented a distinct View of the Person who was sitting up in the Bed, wrapped in a Brocaded Night-Gown, with a Cap of the same, which concealed part of his Visage.

Julia, trembling, approached the Bed, and told him in few Words, the great Anxiety she had undergone on account of his Illness, and the Pleasure she had to see him so much better. He answered, with a faint and low Voice, that he was much obliged to her; and he took her Hand and kissed it.

The Priest then coming forward, betrothed the future Bride and Bridegroom, which done, he informed *Julia*, that the
Mar-

Marquis requested, she would not visit him again 'till the Time they were to be married.

Julia consented to it, but could not help thinking the Marquis's Behaviour uncommon. She then returned to the Countess, who did not chuse to be present for Reasons already mentioned.

The Countess enquired whether the Marquis was much disfigured? *Julia* answered, the Room was so dark, and the Marquis so muffled up, that she could not possibly examine him nicely; but, that she had seen enough to observe there was no other Change in his Countenance, than a very melancholy and serious Air, and several red Spots on it, but his Features were not in the least altered. The Countess said, that if Things were so, she should not make the least Difficulty to go with her, and be present at the Celebration of the Nuptials.

Supper was brought in, the Countess, *Julia*, the Priest, and the Marquis's two Friends, sat down to Table, and supped mournfully enough; the two first of

whom were greatly amazed, that the Marquis had not invited several Persons of Distinction, who had before been asked to the Wedding; nor were they less surprised at the great Stillness they found through the whole Castle, and the Number of strange Faces which appeared, for of all the Marquis's Servants, they knew only the Valet de Chambre.

When the Cloth was taken away, they continued the Conversation, which was full as serious as what had passed during Supper; when one of the two Men, with whom she had supped, asked her to play at Chess to which she consented, but played without attending to her Game.

Being thoughtful and melancholy, she sighed each Moment involuntarily; at last the Clock struck Two, and the Person who had played with her, took her by the Hand, and led her to the Marquis's Chamber.

He was in the same Position as when he was betrothed. *Julia* approached his Bed, the Curate stood before them, the Witnesses on each Side, and the Countess

at a little Distance, for she had determined not to come near or speak to the Marquis 'till the Ceremony was over, that she might have Time for preparing herself to stand the Shock of his Appearance, of which she had conceived so frightful an Idea.

The Priest then opening his Book, which concealed the Marquis from the Spectators, began the Service. A deep Silence was kept in the Room, which diffused an Air of Sadness.

The Ceremony over, the Countess came up to the Marquis, in order to testify the Joy she felt to see him at last her Son-in-Law. He thanked her in few Words; and in a low Voice, desired he might be left alone with Madam *de Blessmont*.

Julia, who had flattered herself with the Hope of lying alone that Night, was very sorry to find she must pass it with the Marquis. He appeared to her to be so much changed, both in Humour and Behaviour, that she was afraid to be left alone with him.

78 *The RIVAL MOTHER.*

She was, nevertheless, obliged to submit to it. The Countess having embraced her, left her amidst her Women, who stayed to undress her. Whilst this was doing, *Lyonnois* brought some Necessaries to his Master, and withdrew. *Julia's* Servants did the like, after having put their trembling Mistress into Bed.

C H A P. VIII.

Falshood puts on the Face of simple Truth.

MIRROR for Magistrates.

THEY were no sooner departed, than the Bridegroom put on his Gown, got out of Bed, and locked the Door. *Julia*, amazed as well to see him walk, as at the Precaution he took, asked, with a redoubled Fright, what he was going to do? He approached her without making the least Answer, took off a Mask of Wax he had on his Face, and shewed himself to be, not the Marquis, but the Chevalier his Cousin.

It

• It is impossible to express the Astonishment of *Julia*, at the Sight of the Man she mortally hated; she would have got out of Bed, and called for the Family, but the Chevalier prevented her.

Stay, Madam, said he, in vain do you think to escape me; the holy Bands we have just entered into (and which neither you nor I can break) have united us for ever. I have a Right to require of you whatever I please; and henceforth, Madam, remember I am your Husband.

You my Husband? replied *Julia*, pushing him from her disdainfully: No, Sir, all your base Arts to deceive me cannot give you that Title, I never thought of plighting my Faith to any one but the Marquis of *Blesmont*. He alone has my Mother's Consent and mine, and to him, alone, I have just now vowed, in the Presence of the Almighty, an inviolable Fidelity and Affection.

The Countess, in the Interim, hearing the Noise, was come to the Chamber Door, which the Chevalier was obliged to open. He spoke in the same Terms to

80 *The RIVAL MOTHER.*

the Mother as he had used to the Daughter ; and added, directing his Discourse to *Julia*, you agree that you are the Wife of the Marquis *de Blefemont* ; well then, Madam, I am now the Marquis ; my Cousin dyed eight Days ago, I bear the same Christian Name, and inherit his Titles, as well as his Estate : I have the Countess, your Mother's Consent, I have yours, and we have all signed the matrimonial Certificate ; therefore, I tell you again, it is impossible to dissolve a Marriage in which all proper Forms have been strictly complied with. It is true, the Love I have for you induced me to assume my Cousin's Likeness, that I might bring you to my Purpose, and my Stratagem has had the wished-for Success. Endeavour then to come to a Resolution, and do not, by an ill-timed Disdain, force me to make use of the Authority of a Husband, who will (and ought to) be obeyed. I give you eight Days Time for disposing yourself to live with me as a loving and obedient Wife ought to do, that Term expired, you must expect no
fur-

further Indulgence from me. Go then, Ladies, said he; and with a malicious Smile added, you, my Lady Marchioness, may think yourself obliged to me, that I have not (considering the Violence of my Passion) this very Night, taken full Possession of your Person.

The Countess, greatly astonished, at this Adventure, did all in her Power to comfort her Daughter; telling her, she did not doubt they might be able to dissolve a Marriage which they had been so tricked into. Though at the same Time she secretly hoped to see her reconciled to, and confirm the Match, by an obedient Condescension, both on account of the Marquis's Birth and Fortune, which was very considerable.

The next Day the Marquis came into the Countess's Chamber, and said to her, it is Time, Madam, you should return to *Paris*, I am going to carry away my Wife, she will set out in a few Hours, I intend to conduct her to an Estate I have, near the Sea-side, where I usually live. I will send you an Account of your Daughter,

82 *The RIVAL MOTHER.*

from Time to Time, and think you had better go away without seeing her, as your parting may too much affect you both.

The Countess could not help feeling some Uneasiness, so to leave her Daughter; however, she resolved to do it, and, was not affected with that Grief, which such a Separation ought naturally to have excited.

Lyonnais received Orders to provide a Post-Chaise immediately, which she got into, with her Chamber-Maid. The Marquis having ordered several of his Servants to escort her, she departed, having first recommended it to him to be tender of her Daughter.

In her Journey from *Blesmont*, the Countess soon forgot that fair Mourner, her Thoughts were now, wholly imployed on the Measures she should take to find out her ungrateful Lover.

In the mean Time, *Julia* impatiently waited to know if her Misfortune was remediless; and, being tired at the Countess's long stay, sent one of her Women to enquire if she was alone, who soon returned,
and

and informed her of the Countess's being set out for *Paris*.

What terrible News was this, to the poor *Julia*? The Maid had but just Power to inform her of it, when the Marquis entered her Chamber, and, unmoved at her Tears, yes, the Countess is gone, Madam, said he, and you must prepare to follow me in an Hour's time. I shall carry you to one of my Castles, adjoining to the Sea-side, where you will have Time to ruminate on your happy Condition.

It is impossible to describe the Affliction of the unhappy *Julia*, at this Moment, she threw herself at the Marquis's Feet, all bathed in Tears, and, conjured him, in the most pathetick manner, not to drive her to the blackest Dispair, by separating her, so suddenly, from all her Relations and Friends. She entreated him with the greatest Earnestness, to send her, only for a short Time, to the Countess her Mother, or at least, permit her to pass some Months in a Monastery, that she might bring herself to obey his Will.

You

You will more readily learn Conformity to it, answered the Marquis, by living with me, in a place where we shall have the Means of seeing each other every Moment. I therefore advise you, once again, to come to a Resolution.

He went out, uttering these Words, and immediately sent the Priest, who had married them, to keep her Company, till the Time of her Departure. She was now under the painful Necessity of hearing the tiresome Declamation he made, to convince her, she was bound in Duty, to love and obey the Marquis, without daring once to reprove him for the ill Use he had made of his sacred Character.

At last, she was told, the Marquis was ready to set out, and was coming to fetch her. He appeared that Moment, and she was forced to follow him; she enquired for her Women-Attendants, when she was told, the Marquis had dismissed them all. This was an additional Cause of Grief to her, since she now found herself deprived of the only Persons to whom she dared complain of her Misfortunes. The Mar-
quis

quis having put her into a Post-Chaise, he, attended by his two Friends, with *Lyonnois* and two Footmen, in the rear, followed on Horseback.

About the close of the Day they stopped at an Inn, where the Marquis obliged her to take a little Refreshment, ordered her to be locked up in a Chamber, of which *Lyonnois* kept the Key.

C H A P. IX.

----- *We cheat the World*

With florid Outside, 'till we meet Surprise;

Then, Conscience working inward, like a Mole,

Crumbles the Surface, and reveals the Dirt,

From which our Actions spring.

FENTON.

THE Marquis then sat down to Table with his Friends, and determined, as the Phrase is, to make a Night of it. And *Lyonnois* being dismissed from any farther Attendance, resolved to go to Bed, but first determined to see if they had taken Care of the Horses.

For

86 *The RIVAL MOTHER.*

For this Purpose he went into the Stable, and, passing near a vicious Horse, he received a Kick in the Breast, which laid him senseless. A Lad who saw him fall, immediately called in Assistance, and he was taken up, and carried into a Chamber, near that of the distressed *Julia*.

The Marquis being informed of the Accident, appeared sorry for it: He directed that proper Care should be taken of him, and a Surgeon sent for, and then returned to his Bottle.

The Surgeon lived a League off, which was a great distance, considering the Situation of the wounded Valet; who as soon as he recovered his Senses, saw the great Danger he was in, and opened a Vein himself, in Hopes it would relieve him. And, in effect, it stopped his Bleeding at the Mouth. Notwithstanding which, he asked for a Confessor, and desired they would, in the mean Time, leave him alone.

So soon as the Company were departed, he summoned up the little Strength he had left, arose, took the Key of the young Lady's

Lady's Chamber, opened it, shut it again, and sat down near the Bed, upon which she had thrown herself, with her Cloaths on. She imagined, at first, he was come to let her know she must set out again, on her Journey; but seeing him covered with Blood, and looking pale, and in a dying Condition, she was struck with Terror.

You see before you, Madam, said he, a Wretch, whom the divine Justice, hath at last, punished for his Crimes. I come to make a sincere Confession to you, to implore your Pardon, and restore to you a Box, which my Master, the late Marquis *de Blesmont*, charged me to deliver into your own Hands.

I am the Cause of his Death, since I was base enough to betray him, and follow the Directions of his detestable Cousin. He it was, who tempted me to betray my Trust, made me the Confident of his Passion for you, and told me, my Master's Life was the only Obstacle to his Happiness: That he was resolved to get rid of so troublesome a Rival, and intended, after his Death, to ask your Mother's
Consent

88 *The RIVAL MOTHER.*

Consent to marry you, and if you refused, to listen to his Addresses, then to carry you off by Force. Mercenary Views induced me to favour his wicked Designs, and made me an Accomplice of his Guilt.

With the help of Money, I procured some Assassins; the Chevalier departed from *Blesmont*, and went and concealed himself in the Forest: He posted the Murderers, and bid them not spare the Marquis, whom, he told them, he had appointed to meet him upon the Spot. His Orders were obeyed, but not fully executed, for my Master was not killed, the Baron *de Granville* having saved his Life. The Chevalier returned to the Castle unseen, and I locked him up in a Chamber (of which I always kept the Key) and which stood at a great Distance from all the Apartments then in Use. Although it was determin'd to destroy the Marquis, at all Events, yet, the Presence of the Physicians, and of the Countess, suspended the Execution of our villanous Purpose. We knew her to be cunning and sagacious, and were afraid to make any further Attempts

tempts upon the Life of the Marquis, least she should discover our infamous Conspiracy: We therefore thought it best to defer it. At last you went away, but, to our great Disappointment, my Master accompanied you, which greatly disconcerted us, as we hoped he would have stayed behind; but, unhappily for him, he returned alone to *Blesmont*.

Soon after his Arrival, being heated and fatigued with the Journey, (after having told me of an Entertainment, he intended to prepare, for you, on your Return) he ordered me to fetch him a Glass of Cordial, which he knew I used to prepare. I flew to my Chamber, where the Bottle stood, and mixed with the Liquor, a Powder the Chevalier had given me, and, which I knew to be a Poison, would inevitably kill, in seven or eight Days time, without leaving the least Traces behind it. The Marquis drank the fatal Draught, and soon felt the first Effects of the Poison. And, growing worse, the next Day, began to be very much alarmed at it. He then wrote to you, and intreated you, in the
most

most pressing Terms, to come to him with all speed.

As your Return would have disconcerted us, in our Schemes, I wrote you Word, he was seized with a Purple-Fever, and your Answer afflicted him in the highest Degree. He should have been contented, he said, could he have seen you, before he breathed his last. And, spight of the Violence of his Disorder, he wrote to you, every Day, and directed me to send his Letters by an Express; I pretended to obey his Orders, and returned Answers myself, which, indeed, were not calculated to make him easier.

And now the Poison began to work its most dismal Effects, which, at last, ended in a kind of Lethargy: When, thinking him dead, we took off the Likeness of his Face with Wax; this Operation recalled his banished Senses; he opened his Eyes, and having heard some Words we spoke, which too plainly convinced him, of the Design we had formed against his Life; he mildly reproached us for our black Attempt, desired we would not destroy him,

him, or at least, that we would permit him, once again, to see you. But the cruel Chevalier told him, he would grant him neither.

He then begged to have a Confessor, which was also refused him; but, at last, after many Entreaties, being alone with him, I permitted him to write a Letter, which he told me was for you. He sealed it up, put it in a Box, which he had in a Chest, near the Bedside, and promised he would freely forgive me his Murder, if I would deliver it into your Hands. This I made no Scruple to promise, but, till this Moment, I have failed in the Performance, fearing lest the Letter should make known to you, the Authors of his Death. It is wonderful, considering the many Crimes I have been guilty of, that I should have entertain'd a Scruple to open this Box; but certain it is, I have not done it: And here it is, added he, giving it to the Marchioness, in the very same Condition the Marquis delivered it to me. My unfortunate Master thanked me for the Favour I did him; told me he forgave me
and

and the Chevalier; and at last, died full of such Sentiments as were worthy of him. During the Course of the Marquis's Illness, all his Servants had been turned away. The Chevalier and I, concealed his Death. The Surgeon of the Place had no Suspicion but it was natural, and the Curate was of the same Sentiments; to whom, we imparted the Reasons, we had, for keeping his Death secret. As he did not suppose us to be the Authors of it, and, as he, attributed to the Chevalier's Love for you, the great Care he took to hide it, he promised us all the good Offices in his Power.

Here *Lyonnois's* Voice failing him, he could proceed no farther, and vomiting up much Blood, fainted away.

The Marchioness, who had not given him the least Interruption, terrified to see him just ready to breathe his last, ran and opened the Door, the Moment the Surgeon, and People of the Inn were seeking him. She trembled so, that at first she could not utter a Word, but recovering from her Fright, told them he was in her Chamber. They entered, and found him

him past the Power of receiving any Assistance.

The Marquis on hearing the Noise they made, got up from Table, and came to enquire the Occasion of it, he stood amazed and speechless at the Sight of *Lyonnois* bereaved of Life, and asked *Julia*, how he came in her Chamber? I know not, answered she, I saw him enter the Room pale and tottering, he made several fruitless Attempts to speak to me, and then dropped down dead by my Bed-side. This she said to avoid giving the Marquis any Suspicion of *Lyonnois's* having acquainted her of the enormous Crime they had committed together, fearing such Discovery might cost her her Life.

The Marquis was not sorry he had got rid of the only Witness to his Guilt, and, intrusting to the Hostess, the Care of burying him, he gave Orders for their immediate Departure, and soon continued their Journey.

C H A P. X.

*All Days to me henceforth are equal :
 Tomorrow, and the next, and each that follows,
 Will undistinguish'd, roll, and but prolong
 One hated Line of more extended Woe.*

CONGREVE.

JULIA, whose melancholy Disposition was much augmented by this Adventure, was no sooner alone in her Post-Chaise (and the Day just breaking) than she took from her Pocket, the Casket *Lyonnois* had given her; she knew it immediately, it being a Present she had made to the Marquis; It could be opened and shut only by means of a Spring not easily discovered. Upon lifting up the Lid, she found a Man's Ring of considerable Value. It was a brown Fauſſet Stone, very neatly set in Gold, representing a small Figure holding a Vail, with which it endeavoured to conceal two Persons, whom a Cupid had linked together. Besides the Ring, she found several Bills of Exchange, for large Sums, and a Letter,

Letter, which appeared to be the Marquis's Hand-Writing, tho' ill wrote; she opened it, and read as follows.

' I Dye my dear *Julia*, and without daring to flatter myself that you will pay the Tribute of a few Tears to my unhappy Destiny; and my greatest Uneasiness consists in reflecting on the Indifference you and Madam *de Salens* have shewn, ever since the fatal Moment of our parting. Have you forgot me then, my fairest *Julia*? It cannot be, I cannot harbour such a Thought, I have had Proofs too manifest of the Goodness of your Heart; and, though Appearances are against you, doubtless you are not to blame. Thus I do you Justice, and must rather think those I have now about me have resolved to deprive me of every Consolation, that I may quit this Life without Reluctancy. Of this I am fully convinced, and this alone is capable of affording me some Satisfaction in my last Moments. Yet before they are passed, permit me to ask the last Favour I shall ever

96 *The RIVAL MOTHER.*

ever intreat at your Hands. A Friend, worthy the Esteem I have for him, was forced to fly this Kingdom two years ago, for having bravely killed an Officer who had injured him. Before the Duel he intrusted me with the Ring and Papers which are in this Casket, and afterwards fled before I could restore it to him. I know he is lately returned, and lies concealed, till he can obtain a Pardon. I could wish this Pledge, which is his Property, might be delivered to him. Do me the Favour, therefore, to send it by some safe Hand, to Mr. *de Falzac*, who will give it to him. You will find a Direction in the Casket. Adieu, my dearest *Julia*, I feel the Destinies are ready to cut the Thread of my Life. I cannot help complaining of their Cruelty, when I reflect that I must leave *you*. My Feebleness, and the Anguish I feel, prevent my writing any longer. Adieu once more, and forever.'

BLESEMONT.

Julia burst into Tears, at the reading this Letter, and sincerely regretted the
Loss

Loss of the Marquis, both on account of his many amiable Qualities, and, as his Death was the Source of the present Misfortunes which surrounded her.

She was also uneasy, about the Ring and Papers, not knowing how she should send them to Mr. *de Falzac*. However, she carefully concealed them, hoping she might one Day, meet with a favourable Opportunity.

During the rest of the Journey, her Mind was full of the Woe she had already felt, and what she had still to fear. The unkind, or rather the inhuman Manner, the Countess had abandoned her, was continually in her Mind, and was one of the chief Causes of her Grief. At length, after a Journey of four Days, she arrived at *Beautros*, which was the Name of the Castle they carried her to.

It was surrounded by a double Ditch, filled with Water, and secured by a Drawbridge, which was now let down, to give a free Passage to its unworthy Owner, and the unhappy *Julia*. The first Object that struck her View, was a wide Court, termi-

98 *The RIVAL MOTHER.*

nated by a pretty large Building, the Windows, Walls and Gates of which were in a very ruinous Condition. An ill-favoured Woman, about forty Years of Age, and another younger, came to wait on her, and open the Doors of the Apartments. The Marquis would have handed her into the House, but she declined his Offer, and unaccompanied, went thro' several Rooms, which appeared to be neither furnished, nor habitable.

At the End of this String of Rooms, she found a Parlour, which adjoined to a Garden, the greatest Beauty whereof was its Extent; and a Wood, the Cover whereof was strong, and well cut through. The Room was hung with an old Tapestry, and the rest of the Furniture was of a piece with it, for Antiquity.

This Parlour was the most sumptuous Part of the Castle, and in it the Marquis received the few Visits which were made him. He desired his Friends to keep the little Vixen, as he termed her, Company, whilst he went to give some necessary Orders. He then departed, and returned
in

in an Instant, followed by his Servants, who began to lay the Cloth, and prepare for Supper. These Preparations were no ways pleasing to *Julia*, who begged it as a Favour, of the Marquis, that she might be conducted to the Appartment appointed for her, as she stood in Need of a little Rest.

He then demonstrated, to her, that she would do better to sit down and Sup with him, than go to her Chamber and act the Part of the Mourning Bride; but she still persisting in her Intreaty, to be dismissed, he called *Lucy*, who was his Housekeeper, and chief Manager, and, furlily, bid her carry her Lady to the little Pavillion, at the End of the Terrace.

The Woman giving *Julia* a sour Look, and taking a Bunch of Keys, bid the Lady follow her. She did not need bidding twice, but joyfully went with her, to the Pavillion he had ordered her to be conducted to; from whence, on the one Side, was a Prospect of the Sea, and on the other, was seen the Wood, the Garden, and the Castle.

The Windows were barred with Iron, and the whole Room had the exact Appearance of a Prison. However, she chose rather to abide there, than be in the hated Company of the Marquis. The Apartment allotted for her, was tolerably neat, but not better furnished than those in the Castle.

Lucy set a Chicken on the Table, of which, *Julia* eat but little; Supper being over, I can now be of no farther Service to you, Madam, said she, and my Presence may be required elsewhere, but I shall come, from Time to Time, to know if you want any Thing. *Julia* saw her depart with great Pleasure; and being now alone, she had Time to ruminate on her unhappy Condition.



CHAP. XI.

*She loaths, detests him, flies his hated Presence,
And shrinks, and trembles at his very Name.*

SMITH.

THE Fatigue, and Uneasiness, she had undergone, made her soon go to Bed, and procured her a pretty long Sleep. The next Day she rose early, in the Morning, and examined every Part of the Wood, and Garden, to try if she could find the Means of making her Escape. But, with Grief, she saw, every Place was well secured, and that the Park and Garden, were inclosed, by thick and high Walls.

Perceiving the little Probability there was, of getting from a Place she detested, her Grief was redoubled ; she returned to her Apartment, where she found the Marquis, who had waited for her with Impatience. He told her how great was his Love for her, and would have embraced her. *Julia*, who considered him only as a Monster, pushed him away with Disdain,

and treated him with the coldest Indifference.

This did not discourage him, and thinking to win her, by a more submissive Behaviour, he fell at her Feet, asked her Pardon, and entreated her to make due Returns to his Love. But finding Prayers ineffectual, he again, had recourse to Menaces, and concluded with telling her, she had better comply with a good Grace, since he was determined, one way or other, that Hour, to obtain his Wishes. *Julia*, now, in her turn, imployed the whole Power of her Charms, to soften his Resentment, she wept, she kneeled, and implored him, not to require of her a Proof of her Compliance, which would be so painful to her, in her present Situation. He, all on Fire, and cursing himself for his great Forbearance, told her he would wait the expiration of the eight Days, he had at first granted her, but no longer, and then left the Room.

Julia, who had the greatest Reason, to fear the Wretch would make an ill use of the Power he had over her, wrote to the Countess,

Countess, her Mother, and to several others, of her Relations, intreating them, with all Speed, to get her out of the Hands of her barbarous Ravisher.

Having sealed up her Letters, she, with Tears in her Eyes, conjured *Lucy* to carry them to the Post-House, without mentioning a Word of it to the Marquis; and as a Gratitude for her Trouble, presented her with a Purse of Money, assuring her, she should have another, if she served her faithfully.

Lucy took the Letters, and promised Secrecy; but as her Aim was rather to make her Court to her Master, she was so ill an Observer of her promise, that she went immediately, and shewed them to him. He perused them, and was enraged at the Colours, in which *Julia* had drawn him. To revenge himself, he resolved, to wait no longer than that Night, for the Gratification of his Wishes. He highly commended *Lucy's* Zeal and Fidelity: Thou may'st, said he, depend upon my Liberality and Gratitude. He afterwards went to Hunting, and did not re-

turn till late at Night ; when ordering his Servants to Bed, he took a Dark-Lanthorn, and a Master Key, which opened *Julia's* Pavillion, and entered her Chamber, without making the least Noise.

He approached the Bed, as silently as possible, and turning aside the Blind of his Lanthorn, had a full View of the sleeping, charming, *Julia*.

How beautiful did she appear to him in that Moment ! And, how beautiful she really was ! Her Arms were out of Bed, and her Neck almost bare.

Spight of her sound Sleep, she then seemed to be in, the Marquis heard her Sigh several times : At last, having feasted his Eyes, with the Beauties which offered themselves to his View, he began to prepare to make himself Master of them. He concealed his Light, threw off his Night-Gown, and lay down by her. Being no longer able to contain himself, he gave her so ardent an Embrace, as suddenly awaked her.

Good Heavens, how she was terrified ! she cryed out, and used her utmost Efforts

to

to free herself, from the Arms of her Ravisher, who prevented her rising.

None but the Marquis, she concluded, could have committed such an Outrage against her, so that she had not the least Doubt but he was the Person. Her Dispair inspired her with new Strength, she got out of Bed. He also got out furious, and, after a thousand Reproaches, and terrible Execrations, left the Room, assuring her, that he should soon find the Means of bringing her to Compliance.

The Moment he departed, she run to the Chamber Door, secured it, as well as she could, and stayed there, without daring to go to Bed, under Agitations of Mind more easy conceived than described. The next Day, the Marquis called *Lucy* to him, and told her what had passed between him and *Julia*; and that he was resolved to be no longer debarred of the Rights he had in her Person; but being willing to avoid Force, if possible, asked her, whether it was not possible to contrive some Trick, some Artifice, to bring her to his Purpose?

Lucy, who had listened to him, with great Attention, was some Time before she returned him any Answer, and appeared so thoughtful, that he asked her, whether her Silence proceeded from an Opinion, that what he had demanded was impossible to be done? Or, from an Intention to refuse him her Assistance, in any Scheme, which might be found feasible?

You mistake me, Sir, answered she, If you think my Mind was employ'd upon either. No, my Lady, is in my Opinion, so unreasonable a Woman, that I cannot help saying, she does not merit the Indulgence you have shewn her: My not answering you immediately, was occasioned by a Scheme, I was then revolving, in my Mind, to procure you the certain Means of passing the Night deliciously with her. I have a Powder, which, if given her, will greatly further your Designs. Its properties are, it deprives those that take it, of the use of Speech, and renders them incapable of Motion; but, at the same Time, without totally depriving them of their Senses. My late Father, who was Master
of

of several deep Secrets, imparted it to me, a short Time before his Death; follow my Advice, therefore, and make Trial of it.

The Marquis having in his Turn listened to her with great Attention, told her he much feared her Powders would fail of those marvelous Effects. However, she encouraged him by assuring him every thing would turn out to his Wishes. She, above all, cautioned him, that he should not be too hasty in going to *Julia's* Chamber, that he should wait at least till Midnight, and should not carry any Light with him, when he went, because if he did, it would totally prevent the Effects of the Powder.

He promised punctually to execute what she prescribed, and desired she would give some of the Powders to her Lady without Delay; and she instantly withdrew to prepare a proper Dose, as she pretended.

As we have often had Occasion to mention this Girl in the Course of this History, it may not be improper to give the
Reader

Reader some Account of her Life and Character.

She came into the Marquis's Service but a few Days before his Departure from *Blesmont*, who, relying upon the Account given of her by one of his Friends, who had recommended her, had intrusted her with the Care of his Family, without making much Enquiry into her Abilities. Thus she became Governante of the House, and Inspector over the other Servants; who consisted of a Coachman, two Footmen, a Negro, that served in the double Capacity of Cook and Valet de Chambre, a Gardener and his Wife and Children.

Lucy was a *Piedmontese*, and about Twenty-seven or Twenty-eight Years old; she was tall, and pretty well shaped: her Eyes were small, black, and brisk, her Nose well turned, and her Sun-burned Complexion, greatly contributed to set off to Advantage, her white and even Teeth. She was plump without being too fat, and, added to all which, she had an Air of great Boldness. Being born in the Mountains, she had been there brought

brought up, and quitted them only to follow an Officer, who had been some Time her Gallant. She was passionate, subtle, and deceitful, and capable of undertaking any thing for her own Gratification. When she entered the Marquis's Service, she had a View to make a Conquest of him, she had taken some Steps for that Purpose, and would have given him some plainer Hints, but for his Journey to *Blesmont*, which had suspended her Project. His Return from thence, at first, filled her with Joy, but when she found he had brought with him a beautiful young Lady, whom he loved, she was inspired with the greatest Fury, but carefully concealed the Hatred he had conceived against her, hoping a favourable Opportunity might offer itself, of getting rid of so potent a Rival.

Such was the Person the Marquis *de Blesmont* had chosen for his Confidante. He waited with great Impatience for the Hour appointed to pay a second Visit to *Julia*; and going there without any Light, he opened the Door, crept into Bed, without

without meeting with the least Resistance, and possessed by his brutal Passion, passed some Moments, so much the more delightfully, as his Caresses were returned with a Warmth and Transport he did not expect.

As he had not the least Tincture of Delicacy, it gave him no Manner of Uneasiness to think he was indebted for his Happiness, to supernatural Means, for he verily believed *Lucy's* Powder had produced this unlooked-for Change, and afterwards falling fast asleep, he did not wake again, 'till about Eight in the Morning.

How great was his Astonishment, on opening his Eyes, to find, instead of *Julia*, *Lucy* in her Mistress's Night-Dress. He was preparing to burst into Rage, when that artful Girl fell at his Feet, caressed him a-new, attributed all she had done to the Violence of her Love, and used every Means she thought most capable of mollifying a Soul like his.

He

The RIVAL MOTHER. III

He pardoned her, and promised that for the future, she should be sole Mistress of his Affections ; that he would hereafter look upon his Wife (as he called her) only with Aversion, and would take every Opportunity to make her feel the Marks of his Hatred.

Lucy approved his Sentiments, and told him the disdainful Behaviour of her Mistress towards him, was so highly injurious, that she deserved the worst of Treatment at his Hands.

Having thus confirmed her Lover in the Designs he had formed against *Julia*, She at last confessed to him, that Jealousy had induced her to set her Rival at Liberty, and that she must be without Doubt, at a considerable Distance from *Beautros*.

The Marquis was on the Point of falling into a Passion again with *Lucy*, when he heard that *Julia* was no longer in his Power. He now began to hate her, he said, and could not pardon *Lucy* for having deprived him of the Means of Satisfying his Revenge upon her.

To

To appease his Anger, *Lucy* told him, it was not impossible but they might recover, and bring her back; that the Road she had taken was far from any Town or Village, and, that besides, she was on Foot. But the next Moment she strongly opposed the Search, telling him, if he saw her again, she feared he would be unable to resist her Charms, and would again make her an Offer of his Heart; that she plainly perceived, he would sacrifice her to his ungrateful Wife, and that the Despair of having lost his Affections, would drive her to take Resolutions fatal to her Life. The artful *Lucy* accompanied this Speech with a Torrent of Tears, and the Marquis, tickled with his new Passion, gave her Comfort, swearing he would never love *Julia* more, and that his only Wish now was to punish and torment her for her insolent and haughty Behaviour towards him; in short, he made *Lucy* agree with him, that it would be a delicious Pleasure for both of them to punish so disdainful and haughty a Creature.

All

All the Servants, and some Peasants, were immediately sent out in search after her, and the Marquis himself got on Horse-back for that Purpose. But I shall now leave them, and enquire what was become of the frightened, flying *Julia*.

C H A P XII.

*Some nat'ral Tears she dropp'd, but wip'd them soon:
The World was all before her, where to chuse
Her Place of Rest, and Providence her Guide.*

MILTON.

NO sooner had *Lucy* perswaded the Marquis she was going to give *Julia* the Powder, than she went to that Lady, and assuming an Air of Good-nature and Compassion, told her how greatly she was concerned at her unhappy Situation; which (she pretended) obliged her to come and tell her in Confidence, that her Master had taken a Resolution to stab her, if she any longer refused to comply with his Desires, and that he waited only till Night, to put his wicked Designs in
Exe-

114 *The RIVAL MOTHER.*

Execution. I advise you, therefore, said she, to seek an Asylum elsewhere, and I will let you out of the Castle; fly then, Madam, for you have not a Moment to lose.

Julia, being now more terrified than ever, presented the Girl with all she brought with her to *Beautros*, after having earnestly intreated, she would free her from a Place, where her Life was in so great Danger. *Lucy* consented, and having led her to the Sea-side, and shewed her some Hills, behind which stood several Cottages, where, she said, she might find Accommodation for the present, took her Leave, and returning to the Pavillion, flew to her Lady's Toilet, and seized every Thing that belonged to her.

When *Julia* found she was alone, she ran with the utmost speed, to get out of the Reach of her bitterest Enemy, and, luckily, she did not miss the Road, *Lucy* had pointed out to her; after having run more than an Hour, without ceasing, she at last come to a steep Rock, close by the Sea-side, but, without perceiving any Habitation,

bitation, where she might take Shelter. Uncertain of her Fate, she looked all around, in hopes of seeing some Person, but to her great Disappointment, found no one to guide her out of this Uncertainty.

What a terrible Situation was this! There could not be a more dismal one. Being ready to drop with Weariness, she sat down at the Foot of a Rock, and could not help shedding some Tears; and, which on a Reflection, upon her cruel Destiny, flowed abundantly.

She had not sat there long, before she perceived a Fishing-Boat, which landed a little above the Place, where she was sitting. A Man of about sixty Years of Age, and a young Lad, came on Shore, loaded with their Fish, secured their Boat, and took a Path, leading between two Rocks.

She immediately called to them, and begged they would shew her to some safe Place, where she might pass the Night. The old Man told her, she was two Leagues from any Village; but if she would accept of a poor Cottage, in which he

he and his Family resided, which was but a quarter of a League off, she should be heartily welcome.

Julia thank'd him, and accepted of the old Man's Invitation; and the young Fellow, seeing she walked in great Pain, prayed her to lean upon his Arm, and in that manner, assisted her to arrive at his Father's Dwelling.

When she entered the Cottage, she found a Woman, and several Children, busy in making Nets. The old Man bid them leave off Work, and provide some Refreshment, for the fair Lady he had brought home.

The Woman, chearfully, did as she was ordered, and boiled some Fish, of which *Julia* eat heartily; when Night came on, the Poor Woman, put on clean Sheets, and complimented *Julia* with her Bed, and made one for herself and Husband, with clean Straw. This Mark of their Respect and Kindness, *Julia* would fain have declined; but they were so very pressing, that at last she was obliged to comply.

The next Day she rose early in the Morning, gave part of the Money she had

The RIVAL MOTHER. 117

had about her, to her courteous Host, and his Wife, and desired they would conduct her to some Place where she might get a Carriage to *Paris*. And, fearing to be discovered, she begged of the Fisherman's Wife to change Clothes with her. The Woman made a Scruple to do it, thinking the Exchange too much in her Favour; however, being greatly pressed, by the Lady, she consented, and gave her the finest Linen she had.

This Dress, mean as it was, did not diminish the Charms of *Julia*: An Air of Grandeur and Distinction, appeared even through that Disguise.

Being pleased she was thus equipped, she bid the old Man adieu, and accompanied by his Wife, took the Way to a Town, about two Leagues distant, where they arrived, after a painful Walk; and, finding a Convent of Benedictines open, at the Entrance of the Town, *Julia*, told her Conductress, she would go in and rest herself there, whilst she went to get her a Post Chaise. Her Purse was but ill furnished for Travelling, but she had

118 *The RIVAL MOTHER.*

had some Jewels left, which she had concealed from her Tyrant, when he took from her those, the late Marquis had made her a Present of.

She staid then alone in the Church, where she sat down, having, with great Fervency, supplicated the Protection of Providence, during her Journey. She had not remained there above a quarter of an Hour, when a Benedictine came up to her, and desired she would depart, for he was about to shut the Doors. She answered, that she waited for a Person, whose return she expected every Moment, and desired he would permit her to stay in the Church, till she came back, she being afraid to wait for the Woman in the Street. He consented, and perused a Book, which he took out of his Pocket; but from Time to Time, casting his Eyes on *Julia*, he at length, perceived a Ring, she wore on her Finger, which he told her, he was very desirous to have a nearer View of, and entreated her to shew it him, and tell him how it came into her possession. This was the Ring which the late Marquis *de Blefemont* had sent to
he

her by *Lyonnois*, and which she had worn ever since.

Julia, amazed at the Friar's Question, was in great Confusion, and, luckily for her, two others came up to the first, and bid him shut the Doors, which relieved her from answering the Friar's Question, and obliged her to go out of the Church. The Fisherman's Wife returned that Moment, and told her she could not get a Post-Chaise, and, that in all probability, she must wait till the next Day, before she could get one. This Intelligence made her uneasy, as she could not prevail on herself to go alone, and lye at an Inn, full of Company, and near enough too, to *Beautros*, to risque her being found out by the Marquis. And she was so much fatigued, that she could not possibly think of returning to the Fisherman's House, whither his Wife was obliged to go, in order to take Care of her Family.

These Reflections greatly disquieted her; when the Friar, who had spoke to her in the Church, accosted her, and said, young Woman, as you seem to be a Stranger, and

and under some Uneasiness, I could be glad to be informed, whether it is in my Power, to do you any Service? And, if it is, I beg you would command me. *Julia* viewed him, blushed up to the very Ears, without knowing the Reason why, and thanked him, in a very polite Manner. In Truth, Father, said the Countrywoman, we are greatly perplexed, this young Maiden is obliged to tarry here all Night, where she knows not any Body, and she is unwilling to lodge at an Inn. She is in the right of it, said he, attentively viewing her, her Beauty would make it too dangerous. Stay both of you here a Moment, added he, I will go and find out a House, where she may be safely lodged. He then departed, and left *Julia* under greater Uncertainty than she was before; the Friar's kind Offer, seeming to her very suspicious. He soon returned, and said, follow me, and I will conduct you to the House of a Lady, where you will not have the least Room for Fear. *Julia* gave her Companion a Look, as it were, to ask her Advice; come along, Madam, answered she,

in a Whisper, if the House he carries us to, belongs to any Gentlefolks, I will leave you there, if not, you shall go back with me. So saying, they followed the Friar, who conducted them to a handsome large House, at the Entrance of the Town.

So soon as they were admitted, the Benedictine asked the Servant, if he might speak with Madam *de Selnac*? (that being the Name of the Lady of the House.) The Footman shewed them into a magnificent Apartment, and said, he would go and inform his Mistress.

She soon came in, paid her Respects to the Friar, whom she did not know, and asked him the Occasion of his Visit? He answered her, that he came by order of the Father Prior, to request she would permit that young Woman (pointing to *Julia*) to lie that Night at her House, she knowing no Person in the Town, and prevented by certain Reasons from going to an Inn? As you are good and charitable, added he, our Prior hopes you will not refuse her a Bed.

God forbid, answered Madam *de Selnac*, her Countenance pleads strongly in her Favour; I am much taken with it. Here the Fisherman's Wife, perceiving *Julia* was at the House of Persons of Distinction, took her Leave, and parted from her with as great Concern, as if she had been long acquainted with her. Madam *de Selnac* then went to fetch a Packet she wanted to send to the Prior, who was her Friend. The Benedictine making use of that Moment, approached *Julia*, and repeated his Request, that she would inform him, how the Ring came into her possession? I found it by Chance, answered she: If so, you will not make any Difficulty of selling it to me, replied he, I will give you four Louis d'Ors for it. It is not worth the Money, said *Julia*, besides I have no Design, either to impose on you, or to part with it. I know the Value of it better than you, reply'd the Benedictine, and can assure you, you will not, in the least, impose upon me, by selling it at that Price.

Here the Return of Madam *de Selnac*, put an end to the Fryar's farther Sollicitation,

tation, for that Time, who, receiving the Pacquet from the Lady, directly took his Leave.

Madam *de Selnac*, having rung for one of her Women, ordered her to take Care of the pretty Peasant, and either to keep her Company, or leave her alone, as should be most agreeable to her. The Servant obeyed, and conducted her to a very convenient Chamber, and perceiving her not inclined for Company, went away.

C H A P. XIII.

So much is Beauty pleasing unto all.

DRAYTON.

JULIA, was no sooner alone, than her Thoughts turned on her meeting with the Friar; she thought it very extraordinary, that he should take so much Notice of her Ring, and seem so very eager to have it. These Reflections occasioned her to examine it more attentively, than she had ever done before; and, by turning, and viewing it every way, she

discovered, on one Side the Hoop, an almost imperceptable Spring. She opened it, and the Stone giving way, she saw two Pictures, one of a Woman, the other of a Man, which represented two Persons, equally amiable. The Gentleman especially, quite charmed her. She thought she had some where, seen a Man like the Picture, and concluded it was the Benedictine.

This Discovery made her long to see him again, that she might satisfy herself, whether it was or not. At the Time she was full of this Idea, Madam *de Selnac* entered her Room. She asked her several Questions, touching her Name, her Family, and the Place of her Birth, and, how her Relations came to suffer, so young and handsome a Girl, as she was, to travel alone? *Julia*, fearing to discover who she was, answered, that her Name was *Julia*; that she was born at *Anteuil*, a Village near *Paris*, where she had been brought up, by Parents, who dearly loved her; that having lost her Mother, two Years before, her Father, who could not, at that Time,

Time, keep her at Home, had sent her to one of his Sisters, with whom she had been ever since, and who was the Person that had brought her to the House, where she then was; that her Father had now sent for her Home, and in Obedience to his Commands, she intended, the next Day, to take Coach for *Paris*.

Madam *de Selnac* gave Credit to this Account, yet could not, however, help being surpris'd, to see so perfect a Beauty, joined to so uncommon and noble an Air and Behaviour, in a Person of her Condition.

From that Moment she took her into her Protection, and told her, she would not suffer her to go in the publick Stage; that she must inform her Father where she was, and, in a little Time, she herself would carry her to *Paris*. *Julia* returned Thanks to Madam *de Selnac*, and accepted her Offer with equal Pleasure and Gratitude, and reserved to herself, the telling that Lady the History of her Misfortunes, till after their Arrival at *Paris*.

Madam *de Selnac* likewise told her, she should be present at the Diversions and En-

tertainments, which were to be given on her Daughter's Marriage, and, which was to be celebrated in three Days; and that she would introduce her to that young Lady, on her return from one of her Relations, with whom she had been on a Visit, for some Days.

When she had said these Words, she heard a Coach stop at the Door, and presently, *Mademoiselle de Selnac* appeared; who, after having embraced her Mother, and given some Account of her Journey, she cast her Eyes on *Julia*, and viewed her with a Surprise, which, nothing but her Beauty, could have excited: *Julia*, on her Part, was not less amazed, when in *Mademoiselle de Selnac*, she saw one of the Persons painted in the Ring.

The mutual Surprise of those young Persons, made *Madam de Selnac* Laugh, who asked her Daughter, if she had ever seen so beautiful a Woman as *Julia*? She confessed she had not, and asked who she was? *Madam de Selnac*, gave her the same Account, as she had herself received, and told her of the Design she had formed, of
 keeping

keeping *Julia* at her House, till their Departure for *Paris*. Mademoiselle *de Selnac* was pleased with that Resolution, and speaking of *Julia*, said, if we may judge from Appearances, her Skill and Fancy must equal her Beauty; I will therefore, take her to my Chamber, that she may assist me, in contriving, and making some few Trimmings, which I want to have done. You will do well, to consult her, said Madam *de Selnac*; but, I could wish her Dress was a little more seemly than it is. I will give her one of my Gowns, if you please, said Mademoiselle *de Selnac*; to which her Mother consented. But, *Julia* fearing it might tend to discover, more plainly, what she was, should she put on Cloaths she had been used to, civilly thanked the Ladies, told them she was accustomed to her own Dress, and hoped they would not insist upon her wearing any other. Madam *de Selnac* replied, since you do not care to put on one of my Daughters, I will get you one to your Fancy, but somewhat neater, and better made, than that you have on. She

immediately sent for her Mantua-Maker, ordered her to take Measure of *Julia*, and buy her some Linen for a Gown, and the Woman promised to obey her Directions, with all Expedition.

Madamoiselle *de Selnac*, carried *Julia* to her Chamber, who performed extremely well, the Work that was given her to do. They spent part of the Day together, and *Julia* answered all such Questions as were asked her, with a Sweetness and Modesty, that prejudiced Madamoiselle *de Selnac* greatly in Favour of her Understanding and Discretion.

And this it was, that led her to believe that *Julia* was not of so mean Parentage as she pretended, and she could not help hinting her Thoughts to her, on that Occasion. But, *Julia*, blushing, assured her she was in an Error.

Madamoiselle *de Selnac*, observing that her Suspicion had made *Julia* uneasy, changed the Conversation, and soon after, left her to join some Company, who were just come to visit her Mother.

Julia

Julia being alone, again opened her Ring, and was now more firmly persuaded than ever, that she had *Madamoiselle de Selnac's* Picture. The Copy was so great a Likeness of the Original, that she could not possibly be mistaken.

Yet, she could not comprehend, how the late *Marquis de Blefemont*, should receive from an Officer, his Friend, a Ring which concealed the Features of a young Lady, at whose House she then was, and of a Benedictine, in the Dress of a Gentleman, who in all probability, was known neither by *Madam de Selnac*, nor any of her Servants. She did not doubt but *Madamoiselle de Selnac* was beloved by him, however, certain she was, another was to espouse her, since this had taken Holy Orders.

After having for some Time reflected, on Mysteries, which she would gladly have seen cleared up, Supper was brought to her Chamber. This was a Favour she had intreated of *Madam de Selnac*. She afterwards went to Bed, and enjoyed more

quiet Sleep than she had done for many Nights before.

When she awaked, in the Morning, her Misfortunes came fresh into her Mind. The Loss of the Marquis *de Blefemont*, that of her Sister, the unnatural Behaviour of her Mother, her Certainty that she had given her Hand to the most detestable of Mankind, and the slender Hopes she had left of being ever parted from him; all made her shed Tears, which, however, she thought prudent to conceal.

The Mantua-Maker came to try on her Gown, she put it on, and immediately dressed her Head. The plainness, yet, neatness of her Attire, gave a new Lustre to her Beauty. When she was drest, she went down to return Thanks to Madam *de Selnac*, and her Daughter. They thought her charming; Mademoiselle *de Selnac*, who, now began to love her, never left her, but those Moments when she was obliged to wait on Company.

C H A P. XIV.

----- *Oh the Pain of Pains,
Is when the fair one, whom our Soul is fond of,
Gives Transport, and receives it from another.*

YOUNG.

MAdamoiselle *de Selnac*, being to be be Married the next Day but one, went to Confession, accompany'd by *Julia*, who asked her, if she was going to the Benedictines? Yes, answered she, my Confessor is of that Order, and I tremble to think that I am about to see him.

When they arrived at the Gate of the Convent, and were getting out of the Coach, *Julia* told *Madamoiselle de Selnac*, that she had infected her with some of her Fears: She smiled, without making any Reply, and entered the Church. A Moment afterwards, she wanted to send for the Father, and not seeing her Footman in the Chappel, she desired *Julia*, to step and ask, in her Name, for Father *Jerome*.

No sooner had *Julia* rung the Bell, than the Door was opened, and she beheld the same

same Friar she did the first Time. She blushed, but he appeared as if he did not observe it, and only asked her, if she was come to sell him the Ring, before her Departure? No, Father, answered she, with some Vivacity, I come to let you know, that *Madamoiselle de Selnac* is in the Church, waiting for Father *Jerome*. *Madamoiselle de Selnac*, interrupted he, with much Emotion, pray desire her to go to the Little-Parlour, next the Convent Gate, Father *Jerome* now hears Confessions, only in that Room. Here is the Key of it, go and tell her he will be there before her.

Julia, who had Time to examine him, during these Words, was confirmed in her Opinion, that the Miniature in her Ring, was his Picture. She had not said a Word of it to Madam or *Madamoiselle de Selnac*, and did not find herself disposed to restore it to the Friar.

Full of this Adventure, she returned to *Madamoiselle de Selnac*, and desired she would go to the Parlour, which that Lady did not approve of. Do you think, said she, I will be shut up, alone, with my Confessor?

feffor? I ought not to do it. What are you afraid of, said *Julia*, I will stay at the Door, and continue in Sight, and you may speak so low, that I cannot overhear you.

There is no bearing you, replied she, smiling, why will you oblige me to take such a Step? However, since you advise it, I will comply; and up she got, that Moment, and with *Julia*, went to the Parlour, the Door of which she opened, and went in.

It was then, beginning to grow Dark, the Curtains of the Room were drawn, and the Confessor was sitting on a Form, his Head bowed down, and supported by one of his Hands. *Mademoiselle de Selnac*, fell on her Knees, the Benedictine bid *Julia* enter, and shut the Door. She obeyed. The Monk then took his Penitent by the Hand, raised her up, and threw himself at her Feet, which he embraced with great Eagerness.

This Action so terrified her, that she would have fled the Room, and cried out: But he prevented her, and said, fear Nothing, Madam, and, oh! stay, and
view

view me well. The Sound of his Voice struck her with Amazement, and drew her Eyes upon him. What do I see, she cried? (and at the same Time sunk down in a Tremble, on the Bench.) Is it you, Count? Yes, it is me, Fair *Leonora*, replied he, placing himself by her Side, who could no longer live without you, and who have traversed immense Countries to be blest with your Presence. And, spight of the Risk, I now run of my Life, the Joy to see, once more, my dearest *Leonora*, makes me the happiest of Mankind.

I arrived Yesterday, at this Town, with my Valet, in the Disguise I have now on. I came directly to this Convent, and discovered myself only to the Prior, who is my particular Friend. I desired him to conceal me in his House, for a few Days, without acquainting him, it was solely with a view of getting an Opportunity to see, and speak to you. He granted my Request, on Condition I would conform to the Rules of the Order, which I agreed to. The Moment after my Arrival, he
bid

bid me go and shut the Gates of the Church, and there, said he, I saw that amiable young Woman, (pointing to *Julia*) and, observed she wore on her Finger, the very Ring I had intrusted to the Marquis *de Blesmont*, before I fought the Chevalier *de Barcel*. My Fears, lest that Ring, which was dear to me, should fall into the Hands of the Chevalier, if I should be killed, induced me to commit the same, together with some Papers of Consequence, to the Care of that Friend. The Precipitation with which I was forced to leave the Kingdom, and my Imprisonment afterwards, prevented my taking it from him again. I was therefore greatly surpris'd, Yesterday, as you may imagine, to see it in other Hands than his own, and asked the young Woman several Questions, concerning it, to which she did not give me any satisfactory Answer. She left the Church, I followed her, and finding she was at a Loss for a Lodging, I thought, if I could procure her a convenient one, she might be induced to let me into some Particulars, I was so desirous to be informed of. With
that

that Intent, I applied to the Prior, and told him, if he could recommend to me a Lodging, for a pretty young Girl, who was afraid to lye at an Inn, I should be much obliged to him; he paused a while, then said to me, *Madam de Selnac* is very charitable, she often gives Shelter to the Poor, you may carry her thither, and recommend her in my Name.

When I found I was to be sent to your Mother, I the more readily undertook the Office. The pleasing Idea I had formed of seeing you again, prevented me from reflecting, that I might find Company at your House, and be discovered by them, or at least by *Madam de Selnac*, who, tho' she has a thousand good Qualities, cannot always keep a Secret. I therefore went without Hesitation, and no one suspected I was not a Benedictine. I succeeded in my Errand, but was so unhappy, that I was not only disappointed of the Happiness of seeing you, but also, in the Hope of getting my Ring, from the Hands of that young Girl. This Morning I enquired of your Servants, if she was still at
your

your House, when I was informed you intended to detain her sometime, which made me somewhat easier. If Chance had not directed your Steps hither, I was resolved this Night, to have reassumed my own Dress, and sought an Opportunity of informing you, either by Word of Mouth or Letter, that I still loved you more than Life.

I have told you what has passed since I arrived at this Town, where, with your Leave, I propose to stay some Days, and then go to *Paris*, in hopes, by help of my Friends to obtain a Pardon, which you know has been soliciting these three Years. If I am happy enough to obtain it, and you still preserve the same Regard for me, it will be in your Power to make me the happiest of Mankind, as, I flatter myself, your Mother will be no longer averse to my Wishes.—You do not answer me, *Leonora*.——You shun my Looks! Alas, how cold and how estranged you seem! Is it thus you treat a Lover that adores you? For Heaven sake, do not
drive

138 *The RIVAL MOTHER.*

drive me to Despair by that cruel Silence, but tell me what you have resolved.

I dare not, said Mademoiselle *de Selnac*, (under the greatest Disorder.) Pronounce my Sentence, said he, I am prepared for it. Well then, said she, since you desire it, it is with Grief I tell you, I can never be yours. The little Probability you would ever return, the Gratitude I justly owe to a Man, to whom I have the highest Obligations, and whom you have heretofore, considered as a dangerous Rival, and worthy a return of Love; and more than all, the Will of my Parents, have determined me to marry him.

The Day after to-morrow is fixed for the Celebration of the Nuptials, which nothing now can prevent. Adieu, Sir, added she, you have obliged me to impart that which I would willingly have concealed from you, as well for the sake of your Peace (at the same Time getting up) as my own. Your Situation grieves me beyond Expression. I esteem you, but must repeat it, I can do no more for you.

At

At these Words, the pretended Benedictine turned pale, and preventing Mademoiselle *de Selnac* from going away. Stay, said he, cruel and perfidious *Leonora*, and behold the last Moments of a Life, which is no longer of any Concern to you.

Saying these Words, he drew a Dagger from under his Gown, and plung'd it in his Breast. Mademoiselle *de Selnac*, astonished at the Deed, screamed out, *Julia* ran to him, but it was too late to prevent the Blow, and she with Terror, saw the Blood flow through the Count's Garment.

Fly to your Coach, said he to them, and leave me to obey my cruel Destiny. I have yet Strength enough to regain my Chamber, and shall be able to hide from all, but my trusty Friend, the Cause of my Death. Adieu, *Leonora*, may you possess, without alloy, the Pleasures and Comforts of that hymenial Band, which, it is my only Satisfaction now, I shall not live to be Witness to.

With tottering Steps he returned to the Convent, and left Mademoiselle *de Selnac* and

and *Julia*, rather dead than alive. They hurried into the Coach, and, under the greatest Disquietude, arrived at Madam *de Selnac's*, who fortunately was not at home

As soon as they entered their Apartment, Mademoiselle *de Selnac* threw herself on a Couch, and remained a considerable Time unable to utter a Word. At last, breaking Silence, and shedding some Tears, said, how unhappy am I, my dear *Julia*, thus to occasion the Death of the most amiable Man in the World, and one whom I so dearly loved! Why then did you treat him so inhumanly, answered she, why sink him down by a Confession so destructive to him? I must confess, I, that do not know him, am greatly moved at his unhappy Fate.

I confess myself guilty, added *Leonora*, but are we Mistresses of our own Hearts? and can we constantly love, when hopeless ever again to see the Object of our Wishes, and of ever joining our Hands? Listen to me, *Julia*, and I will give you a Recital of all that has befallen me. The
Idea

Idea I have formed of you, and the Scene you have been Witness to, moves me to open my Heart to you. You have Understanding, and are compassionate, I will leave you, therefore, to judge whether I ought not to forget the Count. *Julia* thanked her for the Confidence she was going to repose in her, and promised she would pay the greatest Attention to what she should be pleased to relate.

They went down into a Grove in the Garden, to take a little fresh Air, and to avoid Interruption. They had not yet recovered their Fright at the Accident, and it was not till after they mournfully talked over the fatal Adventure, that *Mademoiselle de Selnac* began her History; which she did in the following Terms.

C H A P. XV.

*Behold as many Gallants here
 With modest Guise, and silent Fear,
 All to one Female Idol bend,
 Whilst her high Pride does scarce descend
 To mark their Follies.*

WALLER.

I AM (as you know) an only Child, my Father was a Man of good Family, it was his Fortune, in the last War we had with *Spain*, to receive a Wound which brought him to his Grave, almost in the Flower of his Days, and the very Year I was born. My Mother remained a Widow, and is reckoned a very rich Dowager. She is the Daughter of a Farmer-General of the Revenue, who had amassed a very large Estate. She took so much to Heart the Loss of a dearly beloved Husband, that she retired from *Paris* to a fine Estate she had in *Picardy*. Time, at last, calmed her Grief, and the Remembrance of her Husband serves only
 to

The RIVAL MOTHER. 143

to inspire her with a boundless Love for me.

She passed five Years in that Retirement, and then returned to *Paris*, that she might be able to bestow on me an Education, suitable to my Birth and Fortune. I had several Masters provided to attend me, under whom I made such a considerable Progress, that they were all dismissed when I was twelve Years old. At this Time of Life I began to enjoy a Liberty, which my Mother, who tenderly loved me, took great Delight in procuring for me. She was continually in Company, and on my Account, refused several advantageous Matches that were offered her; I made one at all her Diversions, and she never soured mine by any austere Behaviour, so common with Mothers, and which lays young People under great Constraints. She took Care I should be dressed well, and at the Top of the Fashion; so that I always bore the Belle for Dress, and was sometimes flattered I did the like for Beauty.

I was

I was gay and lively, I loved to please, and had at Command a thousand little alluring Tricks to gain the Hearts of those I intended to make a Conquest of. I should have been greatly out of Humour to have dragged only one or two Slaves after my triumphal Car. My Design, however, was not to engage my Heart to any one, but to inspire others with a Love for me : And nothing gave me so high a Satisfaction, as to see the Preference shewn me above others of my own Sex. But, greatly inclined as I was to Coquetry, I had still a Love for Virtue. My Mother studiously endeavoured to cherish that Sentiment in me, she often repeated it to me, that my chief Care must be to establish a good Character, and gain the Esteem of all my Acquaintance. But, at the same Time, she exposed me to lose that Reputation, by letting me come too soon into Company, and leaving me so much the Mistress of my own Conduct. She likewise suffered me to read all the Romances with which her Library was filled, being very fond of reading such kind of
Books

Books herself, she did not suspect they were capable of turning the Head, or corrupting the Heart of a young Girl educated as I had been.

It is nevertheless certain, that they first taught me what Love is, and made me ardently wish I might be beloved in like manner, as those whose Stories I read, which was enough to have ruined me. Happily I was never susceptible of those violent Love-Passions, which occasion the Misery of the greatest Part of our Sex. I only wanted to gratify my Self-love, and soon I had my Wish; for I plainly saw I had a Multitude of Admirers. At every Ball, at the publick Walks, at the Play, I perceived that many Eyes were fixed on my every Look, and Crowds followed my Steps, to which, I seemingly paid not the least Attention. Amongst the Number of my Lovers, were some, who seriously thought of winning my Heart, but such were my lowest Favourites; they were often melancholy, thoughtful, and jealous, which was enough to disgust me with them. Those who were content

with my Behaviour, and whose only Aim was to divert and amuse me, pleased me infinitely more.

The President *de Mouville*, was the Man to whom I gave the most favourable Reception. His Relations had lately obliged him to quit the Service, in which he had given Proofs of Bravery. Though he is not tall, yet he is very well made, and has fine Eyes, which discourse most eloquently. He has a sensible good-natured Look, and is, in reality, witty and good-tempered. He dances and sings well, and in short, he has justly the Character of being a very amiable Man.

I really thought him such, and was far from being displeased at the assiduous Court he paid me, which was remarked by all our Acquaintance. My Mother, who also perceived it, told me, she could wish he entertained Thoughts of marrying me, for the Match would be agreeable to her in every Respect, and she doubted not but I would, with the greatest Readiness, give my Consent, if he should one Day ask it.

I an-

I answered, that her Goodness made me so happy, that I should defer changing my Condition as long as I possibly could. That, indeed I thought Mr. *de Mouville's* Conversation more entertaining than that of any other of my Admirers, and I was obliged to him for the Regard he shewed me; but I should probably hate him, the Moment he should ask her Consent to marry me, for Marriage was an Engagement I could not help shuddering at.

Here I spoke my real Sentiments, for I considered with Aversion, the Condition of a Wife, who is often forced to obey the lordly Will of a Husband, always wedded to his own Opinion, and often plaguing her with jealousy. I foresaw, that if I was so unhappy as to meet with one of such a Turn of Mind, I must part with that brilliant Court which always assembled whensoever I appeared. And this I thought was too great a Sacrifice to make.

At the very Time I was thus sincerely opening my Heart to my Mother, Word was brought, that Mr. *de Mouville* was

come. I blushed. Is he? said Madam *de Selnac*, smiling, depend upon it he is come to make the Proposal we have been speaking of. If he does, I will give him a flat Denial, said I, to my Mother, with an Earnestness that made her burst into Laughter.

Indeed, Miss, you will not deny me, said the President, entering the Room, and I am so sure of it, that I am going this Moment to settle Matters with Madam *de Selnac*, in order to make you consent to my Wishes. It is very indifferent to me what Measures you are pleased to take, answered I, with an Air of great Reserve and Coldness, but I have the Satisfaction to let you know, that my dear Mamma, there, will not force me to do any thing contrary to my Inclinations.

Saying these Words, I went away to my Chamber, and my Answer threw him into a Surprise he could scarce get over. At last he said to my Mother, what, Madam, have I done to your Daughter? Why did she answer me so coldly? Is a little innocent Banter so great a Crime?

When

When I entered the Room I heard some Words, which I answered without knowing the Subject of your Conversation. I said, in a Jest, I was sure she would not refuse me; for I waited on you now at the Request of the Marchioness *de Mencour*, my Sister, with a Design to engage your Company, and that of your amiable Daughter, To-morrow, at my Sister's Country House, where she is to give an Entertainment, and I am very sorry I have so ill executed my Commission, as I find I have done.

If that was all the Subject of your Visit, reply'd my Mother, you may comfort yourself, my Daughter will soon recover her Good-humour. Bid her come down, said she to one of her Servants, tell her I am greatly displeased at her Behaviour; and want to speak with her about an Affair of Consequence.

The Servant, who came and delivered the Message to me Word for Word, augmented my Displeasure and Uneasiness, by assuring me that Madam *de Selnac* was

H 3. not

150 *The RIVAL MOTHER.*

not so angry as she pretended, for she was laughing with Mr. *de Mouville*.

I then had not the least Doubt but my Mother had closed with his Offer, and thought he paid me but a very ill Compliment, to make such a Proposal without having previously consulted me: It was, in my Opinion, the most unpardonable Step in the World, and the most likely to give me an Aversion to him. I entered the Room, however, but with Tears in my Eyes, which made my Mother redouble her Laughter, which so much disconcerted me, that I could not utter a Word. At last she took Pity on me, and told me how the Affair stood. Immediately I was relieved, and Grief gave Place to Joy. I bestowed a gracious Nod on Mr. *de Mouville*, which made him ample Amends for what I had done before.

He then intreated me to acquaint him with the Cause of my Resentment; but you may imagine I took Care not to tell it him; and our Conversation, the rest of the Day, turned only on the Party for the Morrow. The President stayed
Supper,

Supper, and a great deal of Company coming in, we had a Concert, in which I received the greatest Applause for my Performance, and they extolled the Richness and Compass of my Voice; Mr. *de Mouville* in particular, seemed to be charmed with it.

The Chevalier *de Barcell* was also lavish of his Praises to me. He was another of my Admirers, but among the Number of those, who aimed at being preferred to the rest, without deserving it.

He was yet young, and very inconsiderate and hasty, and without the least Pretence to Wit, took great Pains to be thought one. He greatly affected the Airs of a *Petit-Maitre*, and so fond was he of his own dear Person, that whenever Chance brought him before a Glass, he could not help admiring the charming Figure he saw there.

He was admitted to visit us only because he played high, and was one of my Mother's Set. He was so very jealous of Mr. *de Mouville*, that he was enraged whenever he came near me. He one

Time behaved with the greatest Rudeness to him, which the other answered only with a sovereign Contempt, and by wittily bantering him for his ridiculous De-meanour.

The Chevalier, who could neither repartee nor fight, departed with Looks that plainly shewed his Resentment; however, no ill Consequence ensued. Such little Scenes frequently passed, and diverted me, for I was persuaded no Danger was to be apprehended on that Account. However, the very Night I have spoken of, one passed between them, which frightened me a little, it happened as we were sitting down to Supper.

I was placed between the Viscount *de Chansane*, one of my Relations, and the President. The Chevalier *de Barcell*, who wanted to sit next me, would have persuaded Mr. *de Mouville*, that he had taken his Place.

But the latter, far from agreeing to it, plainly told him he would not yield him the Seat. The Chevalier, without returning any Answer, very rudely drew away

away his Chair; upon which, the President rising, went and took him by the Sleeve, and told him, in a kind of Whisper, but loud enough, however, to be overheard, by several of the Company, that he would make him repent his Impertinence. The Chevalier grew red as Fire, laid his Hand on his Sword, and departed the Company, making Signs, that seemed to threaten, he would take most terrible Vengeance.

Mr. *de Mouville* sat down to Table again, with the greatest Coolness, and asked my Pardon, for having had this Dispute in my Presence. The old Viscount, who had heard what he said to the Chevalier, told it to all the Company, who did not spare poor Mr. *de Barcell*.

In the Interim, Supper passed very gaily, we did not go to Bed till very late, and then we fixed the Time, for setting out the next Day. I slept very indifferently, for my Thoughts were quite taken up with the Pleasure I expected to enjoy at the Marchioness *de Mencour's*. I therefore rose very early, that I might

154 *The* RIVAL MOTHER.

have Time enough to dress, and pack up my Cloaths. We had agreed with Mr. *de Mouville*, that we would go by Water to his Sister's House, which was but four Leagues from *Paris*, and stood not far from the River; and that my Mother's Coach should drive by the Bank-side, to take us up, if we chose to make use of it: We were to take with us, *Mademoiselle de Guspan*, Daughter of a Brigadier in the Army, a Lady of no great Wit, but very precise, plump, and of a fair Complexion, and very moderately provided with the Favours of Fortune.

C H A P. XVI.

----- *Diffimulation dwells,
As at her Home, in every Smile he wears.*

SEWEL.

NEXT Day, every Thing was executed in the manner we had concerted, and about five of the Clock, in the Evening, my Mother, *Mademoiselle de Guspan*,

Guspan, the President, and myself, embarked in the finest Weather imaginable.

The Sun seemed to be concealed by a Cloud, only to prevent his Rays from incommoding us; the River was calm, and the Watermen rowed us with a Swiftneſs, that gave us great Pleaſure.

After having, for ſome Time, enjoyed the Satisfaction, we felt in this manner of Travelling, Mr. *de Mouville* took out a Flute, and played us ſeveral new Pieces of Muſic, Mademoiſelle *de Guspan*, and I, ſung a two-part Song, ſo that between us, we form'd a little Concert. In the miſt of which, we were at once interrupted, by my Mother's crying out, the Boat was filling with Water.

This Information, as you may imagine, frightened us all, and the more ſo, as the Watermen themſelves, ſeemed to be under great Conſternation, and told us, the Boat had ſprung a Leak, and that we muſt look to ourſelves.

You may judge what a Condition this Intelligence threw us into. Mademoiſelle *de Guspan*, cried and rung her Hands, but

156 *The RIVAL MOTHER.*

but for my Part, my Terrors were so great, I had not the Power to cry out; Mr. *de Mouville*, alarmed at our Danger, called to some Persons, who were walking by the River-side, and bid the Watermen row with all their Might, to gain the Shore; we are too far off, answered they, and fear we cannot possibly reach it.

In that Moment the Boat sunk; our Cries were then redoubled, and never was Situation more terrible, than that we were in. On a View of Death, so nearly approaching, I fainted away, they drew me out of the Water, and making me disgorge part of what I had swallowed, I recovered my Senses, and found my Mother almost in the same Condition with myself. But I could not see Mr. *de Mouville*. Mademoiselle *de Guspan* was still senseless, they had taken her out the last. By the side of us, I also perceived the Chevalier *de Barcell*, and three of his Friends: He said they were luckily by the River-side, when our Boat sunk; and, that without knowing who we were, they had immediately
thrown

thrown themselves into the Water, to succour us.

One of those Gentlemen offered my Mother an Asylum, at a House he had in the Neighbourhood, which he begged her to accept of. The Coach, which ought to have kept in Sight of the Boat, did not appear. Mademoiselle *de Guspan* was come to herself, but was not in a Condition to continue her Journey. But the Case being otherwise with my Mother and I, we readily accepted the Offer of the House, towards which we set out, with the Assistance of those who had so generously saved our Lives.

Mr. *de Mouville* did not appear. We hired one of the Watermen to make Inquiry after him, and were grieved at his Destiny. Full of melancholy Ideas, we arrived at the House. After having received all proper Assistance, we were put into Bed, but our Fears for Mr. *de Mouville*, prevented our enjoying any Rest.

We were deploring his unhappy Fate, when the Gardiner's Wife entered our Chamber, with one of the Watermen.

Cease

158 *The RIVAL MOTHER.*

Cease your Grief, Ladies, said she, the Gentleman is not Dead; this Man here, saved him. Pray where is he? said my Mother, very hastily. He is, replied the Waterman, at a Village, the other Side the River, at the Curate's House; he does not know what is become of you, and is under the deepest Affliction.

He has sent me here to get Intelligence of you, being unable to come himself: I will return this Moment, and rejoice him, with the News of your Safety. Make haste, young Man, said my Mother to him, let him know we are here, and that we desire to see him, with us, as soon as possible.

This Account calmed our Fears: Three Hours afterwards, my Mother's Woman brought us the Cloaths and Linnen, we had ordered from *Paris*. Our Coach arrived at the same Time, and we immediately got up. The Chevalier *de Barcell*, and his Friends, (having first obtained Leave) came to testify the Joy they felt in having saved us from an almost inevitable Death. We returned them a thousand Thanks.

Thanks. Mr. *de Barcell* was more assiduous than ever, in his Courtship to me; and I thought myself obliged to give him a more favourable Reception, than I had formerly done.

Supper was set on the Table, he placed himself next to me, and pestered me with his Discourse, which he imagined was full of Wit and Tenderness; but which had not, in reality, the least Appearance of either. My Mother, and Mademoiselle *de Guspan*, were not a whit better entertained by his Friends, so that Supper was soon over. The Fatigue we had endured, served as a Pretext for us to retire. Before we went to Bed, we looked out of the Window, and saw a fine Illumination, and a number of Fire-Works, about two Leagues off, which we concluded must be at Madam *de Mencour's*, and we were not mistaken. I must own to you, I was vexed I could not be present at the Entertainment. I had taken great Pains to make a Figure there, they were to have a magnificent Ball, and I was excessively fond of Dancing.

However,

However, I went to Bed, and slept till the next Morning, very late. My Mother, and Mademoiselle *de Guspan*, who were up first, came and awaked me, and we departed, after having assured the Gentlemen, we would be always grateful for their Favour.

My Mother having sent to the President, to desire he would cross the Water, and join us, we found him upon the Banks of the River, and we proceeded together towards *Paris*, discoursing about our late Accident. Where, when we arrived, our Friends having heard of the Danger we had been in, came to wish us Joy of our Escape.

The News was soon spread all over *Paris*, that the Chevalier *de Barcell* had saved our Lives; and he himself had openly declared it, and thought now, he had a greater Right to importune me with his Love than ever. I was displeased at it. He reproached me for my Ingratitude, in Terms, which so highly offended me, that I could not help telling my Mother, one Night at Supper, that, were it not for the
Obliga-

Obligations we lay under to him, I could wish she would forbid him the House.

The Coachman, who had accidentally overheard these Words, came to me the next Day, and said, I wait on you, Mademoiselle, honestly to let you know, you are not so much obliged to Mr. *de Barcell* as you imagine; for as I was driving the Coach, by the River-side, in Sight of your Boat, I was stopped by one of his Footmen, who having prevailed on me to drink with him, told me he was sure you would not be present at Madam *de Mencour's* Entertainment; that his Master, being jealous of Mr. *de Mouville*, was resolved he should not have the Satisfaction of procuring you that Diversion; that the Watermen had been bribed, and had agreed to run you a ground; after that, to bear away into the middle of the Stream, and take out a Pin, which should give free Entrance to the Water; that his Master, and three of his Friends, all excellent Swimmers, were to be ready, in that instant of Time, to lend you Assistance; and, that one of the Watermen was ordered to
carry

carry Mr. *de Mouville* on the other Side of the River, thereby to separate you.

This Information made me pale with Anger, I went instantly and told my Mother of it; who was equally enraged at such base Treatment. With a View to get a certain Knowledge of the Fact, she sent for one of the Watermen, and threatened to prosecute him, if he did not immediately confess the Truth.

He confirmed the Coachman's Story, fell on his Knees, and begged her to pardon him. The Wretch was dismissed, and the Coachman charged to mention the Adventure to no Person, not even to the President. My Mother knowing he would call the Chevalier to account, and she meant only to let him know she was acquainted with his Behaviour.

When he came to see us, she took him aside, treated him as he deserved, and forbid him the House. We had indeed no more of his Visits, but he was full as troublesome to me. He followed me every where; and played me a thousand low Tricks, by way of taking Vengeance for my Disdain.

Some

The RIVAL MOTHER. 163

Some Business of Consequence obliged my Mother to take a Journey into *Picardy*. I was not then very well; on which account she desired a Lady, her intimate Friend, respectable as well on Account of her Years, as her Behaviour, to permit me to stay at her House during her Absence, which being consented to, we parted from each other with a mutual Reluctance.

The Lady, who was called Madam *d'Olmont*, had a House which joined to the Palais-Royal, and looked into the Gardens. In the second Floor of which, lived Madam *de Guspan* and her Daughter.

The Day of my Mother's Departure, in order to dissipate my Grief, two young Ladies, called *de Saint Leu*, Nieces and Heiresses of Madam *d'Olmont*, were appointed to keep me Company, and entertain me. When the Time for Walking was come, we went into a *Balcony*, from whence we had a full View of the Garden. The President *de Mouville*, who was there, and saw us, came up: He had, I thought, a more grave and serious Look than ordinary. I asked him the Cause of it; I must

164 *The RIVAL MOTHER.*

must leave you, said he, and cannot help reflecting, that, in all probability, I shall not have the Happiness to see you again these twelve Months. My Father, who you know lived at *Lyons*, is lately dead; and our Family Affairs are so embroiled, that I am afraid I shall be encumbered with a tedious Law-Suit, in that Country. The Rigour of my Absence (said he in a lower Voice) would be less insupportable to me, if, before my Departure, I could be certain how your Heart stands affected to me. I have never dared to ask it before, as I plainly saw the great Aversion you have for entering into what is call'd a serious Engagement.

What violent Pangs have I a hundred Times suffered, to see you listen with Pleasure to my Rivals? and at the Thought too, that I had not the least Advantage over them? The Difference between *their* Manner of Thinking and *mine*, gave me room to complain of your putting me on a level, with those Triflers; but I avoided it for fear of displeasing you. I stifled even the Emo-
tions

tions of Jealousy, that I might shew you only an humble, a submissive Love. More than once have my Eyes plainly told my Passion: And my with-held Sighs never forced a Passage, but when free from every Apprehension of being troublesome to you. And, shall all my Tenderness, my Care, my Assiduity, be fruitless? Can you suffer me to depart, beauteous *Leonora*, without giving me some Assurance that you will not forget me, and that I may one Day be so happy as to be Master of your whole Heart? Alas! you do not answer me! you hate me, *Leonora*. Heavens! what a Wretch am I!

I perceived, that in saying these Words he let drop some Tears; I must own to you, I was a little perplexed: Not that *Mademoiselle de Guspan*, or the *Mademoiselles de Saint Leu*, in the least prevented my returning an Answer; for they were too much taken up with what they saw, to lend any Attention to our Discourse. at last, being moved at the Condition my Silence had put him in, I told him I was sorry for his Departure, That I esteemed him

him more than any Person in the World, and that he might depend upon my Friendship as long as I lived.

Your Friendship, answered he, do you think I can be satisfied with so cold a Return as Friendship gives? No, Madam, it is Love I require of you, and which you cannot, without the utmost Ingratitude, refuse me. Promise me that, and you will make me happy. You are extremely difficult, said I to him; for Heaven sake, drop this Subject, you are perhaps more happy than you imagine. Saying these Words, I went up to the *Mademoiselles de Saint Leu*, and the Conversation became general.

I perceived that Mr. *de Mouville* was charmed with my last Words, I was not sorry for it, for I spoke them only with a View to engage him the more, and fix him in my Chains during his Absence. Though I thought him a more amiable Man than any of his Rivals, yet my Sentiments for him, however, did not exceed the Bounds of a sincere Friendship; I should have been vexed to have lost any
of

The RIVAL MOTHER. 167

of my Admirers, and this Motive induced me to give him some Hopes of a Return. He would then have taken Leave of us, but Madam *d'Olmont* pressed him to stay Supper, to which he consented; and this was the first Time he ever appeared grave in my Company. We rallied him upon it, and he came off but very indifferently. As he had a fine Voice, when Supper was over we asked him to sing; but he pleaded his Grief at parting with me as an Excuse. I told him he made so great Ostentation of it, that I was apt to suspect its Reality, and to conclude it put on, only with a View to divert himself. He answered me in these Words, which he composed, and sung upon the Spot.

The Pangs of Absence I already feel:

*And yet my Fate would much less cruel be,
If on my Hopes you'd fix the pleasing Seal
Of promis'd Love, and make me blest in thee.*

I blushed a deep Scarlet, and did not dare say any more to him, lest I should be put
anew

anew into Confusion; as it grew late in the Evening he took leave of us, and we went to Bed. For a Day or two after his Departure, I thought of him, but was no longer uneasy at his Absence.

C H A P. XVII.

Base Ingratitude

*Is such a Sin to Friendship, as Heav'n's Mercy,
That strives with Man's untoward monstrous Wick-
edness,*

Unwearied with forgiving, scarce once pardons.

ROWE.

MADAM *d'Olmont*, kept a great deal of Company, and twice a Week had a Concert at her House, which was performed only by her Nieces, and a few Ladies of her particular Acquaintance, at which I was often asked to sing.

One Evening, after entertaining them with some favorite Songs, Madam *d'Olmont*, pleased at my Performance, getting up to embrace me, dropped down at my Feet: At first we thought she had made
a false

a false Step, and every one endeavoured to help her up, but were soon terrified to the last Degree, to find it to be a Fit of an Apoplexy. This Accident occasioned all the Company to leave us, except Madam and Mademoiselle *de Guspan*. The Ladies *de Saint Leu*, caused their Aunt to be put in Bed, and sent for a Physician and Surgeon. They came, and having taken away some Blood, and given her proper Medicines, which, however, did not answer the intended Purpose, they pronounced it as their Opinion, that she could not survive the Night.

I was amazed to see that this News so little afflicted the Mesdemoiselles *de Saint Leu*, but they were, as I have already told you, designed by that Lady to enjoy all her Fortune. They had already laid their Hands on some of her Effects. The eldest Sister seized her Ear-Rings, a fine diamond Solitaire and her Gold Watch. She also took the Key of the strong Box, and betwixt them shared the Money. And so little Sense had they of common Decency, that they did not even affect to

conceal their Behaviour from me, though if they had considered how often I had been Witness to the many Marks of Friendship shewn them by their Aunt, they must have concluded I should detest their unnatural Conduct.

Spight of the Sentence passed by the Faculty, Madam *d'Olmont* out-lived that Night, and even gave some faint Hopes during three or four Days. Her Nieces, who pretended to be grieved at her Condition, and who would, in reality, been pleased at her Death, totally deserted her. I was the only Person who was really concerned for her Illness; I gave her, with my own Hands, whatsoever the Physicians prescribed, and, regardless of the Remonstrances of Madam *de Guspan* and her Daughter, who were afraid my strict Attendance upon her would injure my Health, I served her as diligently as her Nurse or Chambermaid did.

The Mesdemoiselles *de Saint Leu*, who pretended the Sight was too affecting, staid in their Apartment, and received Visits there.

One

One Evening, when I chanced to be left alone with Madam *d'Olmont*, I saw the Door opened by a young Gentleman of a good Mein, and well dress'd, who advanced towards me to ask Pardon for having imprudently opened it. He told me that as he was walking in the Palais-Royal, he perceived a Friend of his at one of the Windows in a Room of our House; that his Friend had made him a Sign to come in at a little Door which opened into the Garden, which he did, and not having met any Servant in his Way, he had been guilty of the Mistake, which he once more begged I would excuse.

I observed, that when he spoke he viewed me attentively, which made me look down with a little Confusion: I imagined he took me for a Chambermaid, on account of my careless Dress, and I did not undeceive him; but only said, that I presumed he meant to have gone to the Apartment of the young Ladies, who were Nieces to the Person in Bed, and directing him to it, he departed, making

me a very graceful Bow, which I returned with the best Curtsey I was Mistress of, though I must own I was a little hurried at the Sight of him. I followed him with my Looks, without knowing why, and saw him enter the young Ladies Apartment: I found his Arrival enliven their Conversation. Mademoiselle *de Guspan* then entering the Room, I told her I had just seen one of the prettiest Men I had ever set Eyes on, who was quite a Stranger to me, and who was gone to Visit Madam *d'Olmont's* Nieces: And that the Mirth I heard amongst them, was a plain Indication they were well pleased with his Company. I added, I was so enraged at the little Precaution shewn by those Ladies to conceal the Joy they felt at the Hopes of soon possessing their Aunt's Estate, that, independant of my Friendship for her, I would give a good deal that she might live and disappoint them. And so would I too, said Mademoiselle *de Guspan*, but I am afraid it will not happen. A Moment afterwards, we heard Madam *d'Olmont* strain most violently. The Nurse, who

who attended her, bid us rejoice, for it was a Fit of vomiting, which she hoped would save the Patient's Life. This News gave me infinite Satisfaction. I then went up to Madam *de Guspan's* Apartment to take a little fresh Air, and give the Nurse Time to shift Madam *d'Olmont*, and returned in about a quarter of an Hour. She was still very bad, however she had recovered her Senses. She spoke and understood what was said to her, and there was room to hope for her Recovery.

I approached her Bed, embraced her, and assured her how greatly I was rejoiced to see her somewhat better. She was so sensible of the Proofs I gave her of my Friendship, as well as of what she had been informed I had done for her, that without being able to speak, she pressed my Hand to convince me how greatly she thought herself obliged to me.

Notwithstanding the Danger was not now so great, yet they prepared her to receive the last Sacraments: I said it would be proper to inform her Nieces of

it, and also of the happy Alteration of her Health. A Message was sent, and their Servant returned for Answer, that the Ladies who had passed the Day with them, had prevailed with them to pay a Visit to one of their Friends, in order a little to dissipate their Grief.

The Person who had been sent on this Message, returned the Answer aloud before Madam *d'Olmont*, who heard it, and spight of her Weakness, could not help telling me, she plainly saw, her Nieces longed much more for the Possession of her Estate than the Recovery of her Health.

I did all in my Power to remove that Opinion, more especially as her Nurse and her Maids (being provoked with their Behaviour) were ready enough to confirm her in it.

About two Hours afterwards, a Footman came to tell us, that a Man, having enquired for the young Ladies, he had Orders to introduce him; that he was a Jeweller, who had brought home, to Mesdemoiselles *de Saint Leu*, the Ear-rings
and

and Solitaire, which they had given him to new set.

Madam *d'Olmont* desired to see them, and, to her great Amazement, found they were her own Jewels, to which others had been added : She took no Notice of it, but asked for the Key of her strong Box, desired I would take out some Money, pay the Jeweller his Demand, and dismiss him.

I pretended to look for the Key, tho' I knew I should not find it, knowing her Nieces had taken it away ; (but which I did not mention to their Aunt, for fear of making her uneasy) she told me, if I could not readily find it, there was another in her 'Scrutoire, which I might make use of. I took it, and having opened the Box, in her Presence, I was obliged to declare there was nothing in it.

Nothing! cried Madam *d'Olmont*, in the greatest Surprize, but recollecting who was present, cry'd, well then, since the Man says my Nieces have paid his whole Demand, except four Louis d'Ors, pray, Madam, will you give him the

I 4

Money,

Money, and I will return it to you again? I did as she desired, and he went away.

When we were alone, Madam *d'Olmont* seemed greatly exasperated, against Mademoiselle *de Saint Leu* and her Sister. I appeased her as well as I was able; I remonstrated to her, that the least Disquiet might endanger her Recovery; she would follow my Advice, she said, but could not forget the base Ingratitude of her Nieces.

In the Evening, when they came Home, they were greatly amazed, to hear their Aunt was so much better: Unfeigned Grief then really appeared in their Countenances: It certainly was a terrible Stroke to them, who, all along, had acted from such selfish Principles, and who had flattered themselves with the speedy Possession of a considerable Estate, to see their Hopes all blasted in a Moment. They shut themselves up, for some Time, in their Chamber, doubtless, to deplore the Fickleness of Fortune: They afterwards came to their Aunt's Chamber-Door, but that Lady, who had entreated Madam *de Guspan*, and her Daughter, to keep her Company,

Company, bid them begone to their Apartment, and not be troublesome to her. Notwithstanding such positive Orders, they would have come in, but Madam *de Guspan*, remonstrating to them, that their Presence might be disagreeable, they returned to their Chamber, sent and desired to speak with me. I went, and they questioned me about what had passed, when I had the Pleasure to assure them, they would not very soon put on Mourning. I also related to them the Circumstance of the Jeweller, and that of the strong Box, and what Effect the same had produced on the Mind of Madam *d'Olmont*.

They told me with great Bitterness, that they were obliged to *me* for all that had happened to them, which they would never forget. I neither love, or fear you enough, said I, to think it worth while to justify myself, from a Reproach, I am proud to have merited. I then left them, and never spoke to them afterwards.

Some Days after this Conversation, I had the Pleasure to see Madam *d'Olmont* past all Danger; I sent the News to my

Mother, who was delighted to hear it: She wrote me back Word, that I should see her again, in fifteen Days at farthest; but she did not then return, so that I continued to stay, some Time longer, with *Madam d'Olmont*, who at length perfectly recovered her Health.

The unnatural Behaviour of her Nieces, determined her to send them back to the same Convent from whence she took them.

Their Aunt having inflicted this Punishment on them, called me to her, one Morning, tenderly embraced me, and after having exaggerated the Obligations she lay under to me, she declared it was her Resolution to make me her Heiress, and to which End, she was about to send for a Notary.

I thanked her sincerely, for her good Intentions, but begged she would not listen to Sentiments, which her Friendship suggested in my Behalf; but on the contrary, to pardon *Mesdemoiselles de Saint Leu*, and restore them again to her Favour. But she was inflexible, to every thing I offered on this Head, and answered, that Defects
of

of the Heart were incurable; that they were born ungrateful and selfish; that a Reformation was not to be expected at their time of Life, and therefore she would see them no more.

If you are so resolved, Madam, said I, I will say no more of it; but I have one Favour still to ask of you, which I hope you will not refuse me. You have another Niece, who loves you, she is far from being rich, and has a large Family; your Nieces *de St. Leu*, I know, have set you at Variance with her, and probably, by the help of Mis-representations; restore to her your Friendship; she merits your Bounty: And whatever you will be pleased to do in her Favour, I shall esteem as an Obligation done to myself.

Madam *d'Olmont*, charmed at my Disinterestedness, and embracing me again, you are too generous, my dear Child, said she to me, I am sorry you refuse the Gift I proposed to make you. And, at your Request, Mrs. *de Vambel* shall have my Estate. But, give me in your turn, a Proof of your Friendship, by accepting, from this
Moment,

Moment, the Ear-rings and Solitaire, which my Nieces *de Saint Leu* had seized on. I am now too old to wear them, and shall be pleased to see them yours, in my Life-time, and to think that they may, sometimes, bring me to your Remembrance after my Death.

Tho' I was resolved not to accept the Gift, I chose not to refuse it any longer, for fear of displeasing her.

C H A P. XVIII.

To suppliant Virtue nothing is deny'd.

GARTH.

SOME Days after, we paid a Visit to Mrs. *de Vambel*. She, her Husband, and Children, lived at a little Farm, the Income whereof, very frugally managed, was scarce sufficient for their Maintenance.

Madam *de Guspan*, and her Daughter, were requested to accompany us; the former of whom, being somewhat indisposed, declined being of the Party, but consented to her Daughter's going. We arrived

arrived at Mrs. *de Vambel's* before Noon, who was extremely surprized at our Visit, and came trembling to meet her Aunt, whose Hand she kissed a hundred times, and asked her, to what lucky Chance she owed the Happiness of seeing her?

I will tell you, answered Madam *d'Olmont*, embracing her, however, not till after Dinner. We went into the Parlour, where we saw four little Girls, the eldest of whom might be about seven, or eight Years old. They were all busy at Work, and as soon as they saw us, they arose from their Seats, and saluted us with a Gravity and Presence, that convinced us they were well brought up. I observed Madam *d'Olmont* took an Affection to them, that very Moment; she bestowed the tenderest Caresses on them; and which, seemed to make an Impression upon the Children. In the mean Time, Mrs. *de Vambel* went to order for our Dinner, the best she could provide for us.

This was the first Time I ever saw her. I found I had not been deceived, when I was told she was very amiable. With Features

tures, which do not commonly strike at first Sight, mixed with a graceful Air, a noble Deportment, and a delicate Sweetness and Sensibleness, diffused over her Countenance, made her very agreeable.

I was telling Madam *d'Olmont* my Sentiments of her, when she came in with Mr. *de Vambel*, whose Countenance and Behaviour pleased us also, tho' he had naturally a grave, reserved Look.

After Dinner, they undeceived Madam *d'Olmont*, as to the Prejudices she had entertained against them, and convinced her that the Mesdemoiselles *de Saint Leu*, had unjustly represented them to her. She did not doubt it, she said, and immediately acquainted them with what she intended to do in their Favour, and added, they were entirely obliged to *me* for it.

I would have you make ready, said she, to follow me with your Family; you shall have your Cousin's *de Saint Leu*'s Apartment, and for the Future I will look upon you as my own Children.

Mrs. *de Vambel* fell at her Aunt's Feet, and embraced them, and said to her,
you

you give me new Life, Madam, by these Assurances of your Friendship, which is a Treasure infinitely more valuable to me than the Riches you give me a Prospect of. I must, however, confess that the last Favour affords me the greatest Satisfaction, when I reflect that it will enable me to bring up my Children in a suitable manner: That they will no longer want the Necessaries of Life; that I shall be eased of the Apprehensions and Fears, I have for several Years laboured under, of seeing my dearly beloved Husband forced away from me by Creditors, deaf to the Calls of Mercy, and unmoved at the Sufferings we have sustained. In a Word, I cannot, without a transport of Joy, think, that I am on the Point of being happy; and, that to you, Madam, said she, her Eyes all bathed in Tears, whom I love and reverence, I shall be indebted for my Happiness.

Tho' Mr. *de Kambel* was as much moved as his Wife, at Madam *d'Olmont's* Goodness, and my Generosity, as they were pleased to term it, yet his Heart was so

full, he could scarce utter a Word to testify his Gratitude. The little Girls, who surrounded us, were continually kissing their Aunt's Hand, and wept at Sight of the Joy which so manifestly shewed itself in their amiable Parents.

The Sensibility of this little Family, quite altered us, I had my Share of their Caresses and Thanks. After having staid sometime longer, we embraced them, and got into our Coach.

C H A P. XIX.

*Women are govern'd by a stubborn Fate ;
 Their Love's insuperable as their Hate ;
 No Merit their Aversion can remove,
 No ill Requital can efface their Love.*

WALLER.

OUR Road lay through the Forest of Saint Germain, and as it was very fine Weather, Madam d'Olmont bid her Coachman drive gently, altho' it was growing late.

Scarce

The RIVAL MOTHER. 185

Scarce had we gone three Steps, when two Men came up to the Coach Door, stopped us, and demanded our Money. We did not make the least Resistance, but did as we were ordered. And the Moment they were about to leave us to continue our Journey, one of them thought fit to seach the Box usually carried in the Coach.

Two Gentlemen, who accidentally passed by, saw the Confusion we were in, and came to our assistance. One of them fell upon the Highwayman who was rummaging the Coach, and killed him. The other Robber fired his Pistol, wounded the Gentleman in the Leg, and dismounted him. In the Interim, our Servants having had Time to recover their Surprise, laid Hands on the Man, and secured him.

The Gentleman, who had disengaged himself from his Horse, came up and was about to put an End to the Wretch's Life. But reflecting, it was more proper for him to die by the Hands of the Executioner, he directed Madam *d'Olmont's* Footman and his own, to bind him to a
Tree,

186 *The RIVAL MOTHER.*

Tree, that they might get somebody to take him into Custody, and carry him to Prison. The Servants were going to obey him, when Three Game-keepers came up, drawn by the Report of the Pistol, who took Charge of the Fellow, searched him and his Comrade, and returned us what we had been robbed of. Madam *d'Olmont* gave them four Louis d'Ors, and afterwards thanked the Gentleman for having so timely relieved us. And seeing he was wounded, she desired he would get into the Coach : He accepted the Offer, and we brought him to *Paris*.

When I was a little recovered from my Fright, I viewed, with greater Attention, our generous Defender, and was surprized to find him to be the same Person who came into Madam *d'Olmont's* Chamber, when I attended her during her Illness. The Moment I viewed him, our Eyes so exactly encountred, that I cast down mine, and felt my Face instantly all over in a Flame. Mademoiselle *de Guspan*, who perceived it, asked me the Cause, but I pushed

pushed her, to make her hold her Tongue, and spoke of something else.

In the mean Time, Madam *d'Olmont*, desirous to know the Man she had such great Obligations to, pressed him to tell her his Name and Place of Abode,

He told her, he was a *Swede*: That he was called the Count *de Zillman*; that a Desire of seeing the World, had induced him to leave his Country about four Years ago; that he had been at all the Courts of *Europe*, and had served at some of them as a *Voluntier*, which he hoped he should also do in *France*, during his stay there, and that for the short Time he should remain at *Paris*, he would do himself the Pleasure of embracing every Opportunity to pay his Respects to her, if she would permit him. Madam *d'Olmont* assured him he should always be extreamly welcome. She also told him he had been represented to her as a very worthy Gentleman, and she was very glad she was convinced he merited that Character.

The

188 *The RIVAL MOTHER.*

The Count made such Returns for her Civility, as might have been expected from a very modest sensible Man.

We reached *Paris* about Nine o'Clock at Night. The Count *de Zillman* lodged at a Gentleman's House, with whom he had contracted a Friendship in *Sweden*, and who had lately married a beautiful young Lady of great Fortune. His Friend was called Mr. *de Falzac*, and to his House Madam *d'Olmont* carried the Count.

When we arrived there, his Leg was so swelled, that he was obliged to be carried up to his Chamber.

Madam *d'Olmont*, who was desirous to know what the Surgeon thought of his Wound, went up also. Mr. and Madam *de Falzac* were gone out. We were shewn into another Room, whilst the Count was put to Bed. In about a Quarter of an Hour, the Surgeon, having examined and dressed the Wound, came and informed us, that in a few Days he would so effectually cure him, he should be able to walk as well as ever.

This

This Information gave us great Satisfaction. We advised the Count to keep himself very quiet, and then returned to Madam *d'Olmont's*, where we found Madam *de Guspan*, who was very uneasy at our staying out so late. We related to her our Adventure. Mademoiselle *de Guspan* was so full of the Count's Praises, that I found she had a liking to him. I silently approved her Panegyrick, but could not help admiring the Vivacity and Pleasure with which she spoke of him. I rallied her smartly, and advised her to beware, lest Love, whose Enchantments she had so often affected to hold in Contempt, should employ the Count to make her sensible of his Power. She answered me, smiling, that she should readily submit to his Sway, if he was her Victor. Our Conversation turned upon him the remaining Part of the Evening, till we separated to go to Rest.

The next Day, Madam *d'Olmont* sent to enquire how he did; and to let him know she would visit him, whilst he should be obliged to keep his Chamber,
and

and bring Company with her. And two Days after, she carried Madam *de Guspan*, her Daughter, and myself, to Madam *de Falzac's*, whom she knew nothing of but from Report.

That Lady, knowing who we were, and being informed of the Occasion of our Visit, received us very politely. There was a great deal of Company in the Count's Chamber, but he was the first Person I took Notice of. I saw he was pleased at our Arrival, and that his Eyes were often fixed on me. Mademoiselle *de Guspan* perceived it, and mentioned it to me, with a Vexation she could not conceal.

The Count several Times thanked Madam *d'Olmont* for her Visit. The Conversation was for some Moments general: Afterwards, Mr. *de Falzac* proposed a Game at Piquet, to Madam *d'Olmont* and Madam *de Guspan*, to which they consented, and pressed me to play a Game at Reverffi. Mademoiselle *de Guspan*, who chole to be a Looker-on, engaged herself in Conversation with the Count, two very agree-

The RIVAL MOTHER. 191

agreeable Ladies, and two Officers of the Guards, Brothers to Madam *de Falzac*.

The Chevalier *de Barcell* came in soon afterwards ; he was at first a little disconcerted to find Mademoiselle *de Guspan* and me there, but he soon recovered himself, and, as he does not want Assurance, he accosted us with as free an Air as if nothing had happened.

I was tired the first Part of the Game, but it ended more agreeably. A Counsellor of the Parliament, an Officer in the Exchequer, and Madam *de Falzac*, with whom I played, did not much mind their Cards, so that our Conversation became pretty lively, and turned upon Love. My whole Discourse tended to prove that I was all Indifference, from whence the Gentlemen took occasion to rally me. It is impossible, Mademoiselle, said one of them to me, that so beautiful a young Lady as you are, can fail of making Conquests, or that you yourself should be exempt from feeling the tender Passion. The Count *de Zilman* seemed to listen with
At-

192 *The RIVAL MOTHER.*

Attention to our Discourse, and I could perceive him sometimes to smile at my Replies, and at others he appeared to be very grave and thoughtful.

The Game being over, *Madam de Falzac* was desired to touch her Harpsicord. It shall be on Condition some of the Company will sing then, said she. *Madam d'Olmont*, commending my Voice, desired I would favour them with a Song; I consented, and having ended, the Company were so complaisant as to give me great Applause; but the Count *de Zilman*, I thought, was a little more sparing of his Praises. I had observed the Chevalier *de Barcell* to speak to him in a low Voice, and soon found their Conversation was about me. Curiosity leading me to know what they said, I got nearer to them, under the Pretence of more conveniently hearing *Madam de Falzac*, who was then playing a Lesson; when I overheard the Chevalier say, I am desperately in Love with her, and am almost mad that her Mother denies me the Happiness of seeing her. Confess the Truth, dear *Zilman*, is she

she not adorable? I see nothing very extraordinary in her Beauty, said the Count, and I know some who please me much better, particularly, I think Mademoiselle *de Guspan* is at least as handsome.

This Answer severely mortified my Self-love, I thought I had observed from the Count's Looks, that his Sentiments were more favourable to me, therefore I could not pardon the Preference he gave to my Friend.

Happily for me, it was now Time to go home, and we departed, after Madam *de Falzac* had made Madam *d'Olmont* promise she would repeat her Visits, and not desert the sick Man.

On our Return home, Mademoiselle *de Guspan* would have talked of the Count *de Zillman*, but I told her a little roughly, that not being so much prejudiced in his Favour as she was, it was no Pleasure to me to be continually stunned with the Praises of him. She was so surprized and mortified at this Answer, that she immediately wished me a good Night, and departed, without saying a Word more.

C H A P. XX.

*A Lover's like a Hunter ;
If the Game be got with too much Ease, he cares
not for't.*

HAUSTED.

THE next Day arrived Mr. and Mrs. *de Vambel*, with their whole Family. Madam *d'Olmont*, their Aunt, settled on them an Income sufficient to live comfortably. Their new Fortune did not change their Manner of thinking : They still continued their plain and agreeable Behaviour.

Two Days after their Arrival, their Aunt proposed to me to make Madam *de Falzac* another Visit. A Pain in the Head served me as a Pretext to decline it; I staid with Mrs. *de Vambel*, and Mademoiselle *de Guspan*, only accompanied her.

During the Time the Count kept his Chamber, they went there several Times without me; which was not at all agreeable to Madam *de Falzac*, who had conceived

a Friendship for me; and which was every Day heightened by the Accounts she received of me from Madam *d'Olmont*, who described to her my Character and Understanding; gave her an ample Relation of the Care I had taken of her during her Illness; my Generosity in refusing to be her Heiress, and, lastly, what I had done for her Niece.

This advantageous Account of me, one would think, could not fail gaining me the Esteem of all that heard it; yet, I found, from Madam *d'Olmont*, that the Count *de Zillman* had paid so little Attention to what she said of me, that she could not help scolding him for it. Being touched to the Quick, I resolved to put in practice every Method capable of inspiring him with Love, which, I thought, would be an infallible Revenge for his Indifferency to me.

The first Visit he afterwards paid to Madam *d'Olmont*, I affected to receive him very graciously, and played off all those little Nothings which I had before so successfully made use of. He in return

behaved very politely, indeed, but did not drop a Word that could flatter my Hopes.

His Behaviour was not the same to the rest of the Company, particularly *Mademoiselle de Guspan*, to whom he found an Opportunity of saying some civil and gallant Speech every moment. I saw she took Notice of the Preference he gave her, to me, and that she was inwardly pleased with it. She had been so used to take up with only the refuse of my Admirers, that she thought the Conquest of the Count, a great Honour to her.

The Advantage she had gained over me, brought on a little Coldness between us, and I began to be weary of throwing away my Civilities upon the Count. Some Days after, Word was brought that he was come to visit us ; I was alone, *Madam d'Olmont* being just gone to her Closet.

Surprized to find only me, he said he was sorry he had broke in upon my Privacy ; and asked why *Mademoiselle de Guspan* did not keep me Company ? I do not remember the Answer I made him, but I know the Introduction to his Conversation

The RIVAL MOTHER. 197

versation was not very agreeable to me, and I believe I shall never forget, that whilst he stayed with me, he talked of nothing but that Lady, or of indifferent Things.

As I knew the Count had a great deal of Wit, I could not forgive his engaging me in so dull and tiresome a Conversation. I sent Word to *Madam d'Olmont*, and *Mademoiselle de Guspan*, that he was with me, and I retired under pretence of writing a Letter to my Mother. When I was got to my Chamber, I shed some Tears, which Vexation and the Count's Indifference brought into my Eyes. Soon afterwards *Madam d'Olmont* sent to desire I would come down and hear him play on the Violoncello, an Instrument he greatly excelled on. I came, and far from praising his Performance, I purposely talked with some of the Company. They desired him to stay Supper, and, on his Account, engaged *Madam de Guspan* and her Daughter. He sat between them at Table, and was very gay and chearful.

198 *The RIVAL MOTHER.*

After Supper, I saw Mademoiselle *de Guspan* very artfully slide something into the Sleeve of the Count's Coat, and heard her bid him take care not to lose it. I found he did not attend to what she said, and she went into another Room. I therefore approached the Count; took away the Paper, and flew to my Chamber, eager to peruse it. The Billet was couched in these Terms.

SIR,

YOU have not yet declared to me that you love me, but, however, your Discourse, as well as your Behaviour, is, I think, a sufficient Proof of it, and I am convinced, that the few Opportunities you have had of being alone with me, have prevented you from saying a thousand Things you intended. This Restraint is full as irksome to me as to you; therefore I propose to come into the Garden to-morrow at Two in the Morning, through the Door you know of, attended only by my Chambermaid. I flatter myself that this Step will not make you entertain

The RIVAL MOTHER. 199

certain a disadvantageous Opinion of me. You can be no Stranger to my Prudence, and surely must be persuaded, that my sole View is to know if I may depend on your Affection, and to take all suitable Measures to join our Hands for ever.

DE GUSPAN.

I thought this a pretty warm Letter for a Girl in her first Intrigue. I knew she had been carefully Educated, and was amazed how she dared give a Rendezvous in the Night-time to a young Gentleman she scarce knew.

I was, at first, tempted to keep the Letter, which, if delivered, might probably lose her the Count's Esteem; But I thought since she was so careless of her own Reputation, it was not my Business to interpose. That she would not probably pay any Regard to the Counsel I should give her, wherefore it would be best to leave her to her own Conduct. I returned then, and whilst the Count was playing with her at Piquet, I slipped the Letter into the Place I had taken it from.

And standing afterwards at a little Distance, perceived her to whisper him in the Ear. He immediately took the Letter, and put it in his Pocket. I waited with Impatience for the Hour of Rendezvous, and shutting myself up in my Chamber, I looked out of the Window; at length the Clock struck Two, I heard the Door open, and tho' the Night was dark, I perceived *Mademoiselle de Guspan*, who after having listened if she could hear any body, crossed the Garden, with Intent to walk round it.

Whilst she was looking about for the Count, one of the Servants who was up, having found the Door open, locked it. *Mademoiselle de Guspan* would have come in again, but could not possibly do it. I was determined to enjoy a little the Perplexity she was under; but at last, I was sorry for her Situation, and went to extricate her from her Difficulty. *Mademoiselle de Guspan*, and her Maid, immediately ran up Stairs, and without speaking a Word to me, went to their Chamber. I made some Attempts to stop her, and let her know she was indebted to me for coming

ing

ing in without being discovered, but it was to no Purpose. I returned, with a Design to shut the Door, when on approaching it, I saw a Man standing without, just ready to enter the House. I thought of nothing but reaching the Staircase. The Person following me hastily, I was about to call out for Help, when he said to me, be not afraid, I am the President *de Mourville*, I do not design to incommode you; I only want to be satisfied if I was in the wrong in taking you for Mademoiselle *de Selnac*? No, said I to him in amaze, you are not mistaken; but pray depart this Moment, I am terrified to Death, lest I should be found here, and some one should catch us together. Is it you? replied he, coldly. And do you dare avow it? what is become of that Virtue for which you were once so deservedly esteemed?

I was so displeased at these Words, and mortified at his groundless Suspitions, that I did not once offer to justify myself. I knew myself blameless; and I also knew he was above saying any thing that might

hurt my Character. Therefore left him without making the least reply, when I heard him say, Heavens! how am I deceived! perfidious *Leonora*! He then went away, and I returned to my Chamber full of Vexation and Disquiet.

The next Day Mademoiselle *de Guspan* would not come down under pretence of the Head-ach, I would have visited her, but she would not be seen. The Day after going again, her Mother invited me in. At Sight of me Mademoiselle *de Guspan* blushed: I asked her, in a Whisper, if her Indisposition was not owing to her last Night's Walk?

This ironical Question did not please her, and she made me a tart Reply, denying the Fact. But I put her in mind of every Circumstance relating to it.

She was greatly surprized, and doubted not but the Count had told me all that had passed. She thought she was made a Sacrifice of, and even concluded that an excessive Indifference had induced the Count to disregard the Assignment. She instantly took the Resolution to break off
with

with me, see him no more, and by some Contrivance, to set him against me as much as possible. The Chevalier *de Barcell* was, she thought, a fit Agent to further her Designs, and with him she reconciled all Differences.

C H A P. XXI.

*Be thou as chaste as Ice, as pure as Snow,
Thou shalt not escape Calumny.*

SHAKESPEAR.

THE next Day the Count *de Zillman* came to visit Madam *d'Olmont*; being told Mademoiselle *de Guspan* was not well, he would have gone and kept her Company, but Orders were given that he should not be admitted; Madam *de Guspan* herself had issued them. Her Daughter had found Means to persuade her, that he had spoke of her in Terms derogatory to her Reputation.

He left the House without taking leave of us; I could not help casting a Look after him, tho' it piqued me to see that he
visited

visited Madam *d'Olmont* only on Account of Mademoiselle *de Guspan*.

I saw him walking in the *Palais-Royal*, the rest of the Day, with a pensive, melancholy Air, and I often went to the Window, involuntarily, I may say, to view him.

The President *de Mouville*, was also there, walking with his Sister and some other Ladies. He did not vouchsafe me so much as a Look. Madam *d'Olmont*, who knew him again, surpris'd to see he was returned, and had not visited her, called to him, and desired he would come in.

He came, and behaved to every one else, with the greatest Politeness, but to me with so particular an Indifference, that I could not help laughing, which was observed by Madam *de Vambel*. They enquired the Cause of his returning so suddenly.

My Business, said he, did not require a longer stay at *Lyons*, nor was my Presence absolutely necessary; I therefore came back to see some Friends, as I fondly imagined, some faithful Friends; but I was deceived,
for

for they have proved themselves guilty of the blackest Ingratitude. At the same Time, he cast on me a Look, full of Disdain, and left the Company, under Pretence of joining the two Ladies, who were walking with his Sister.

Madam *de Vambel* then approached me, and in a Whisper asked me, is this the President *de Mouville*, who, I have been told, loved you so desperately? surely his Love is very cold and indifferent, and I should be very sorry if Mr. *de Vambel* treated me in such a manner. I smiled, and told her, if she would take a Walk with me, I would let her into the Reason why the President did not speak to me. That I was convinced she was my Friend, and therefore I should not scruple to trust her with Secrets, which I would not reveal to any other Person whatsoever.

Here *Julia* interrupted Mademoiselle *de Selnac*, and said to her, spight of my earnest Desire to hear the Sequel of so interesting a Story, I cannot help reminding you, that, perhaps this very Moment, the poor unfortunate Count *de Zillman* is breathing

206 *The RIVAL MOTHER.*

breathing his last. Surely Compassion should engage you to send, and enquire after his Condition. Who can I employ, said she, you are the only Person I dare trust with such a Message, therefore go, I entreat you ;--- but stay, said she, I will write to the Prior, which will do as well. She went to her Chamber, wrote, and sent the Letter by a Maid Servant, she thought she could depend upon.

The Servant went, and returned immediately, and said, she had been told, it was an unseasonable Hour, and that every Body was gone to Bed. Well then, said Mademoiselle *de Selnac*, we will go Tomorrow ourselves, and ask the Prior, he will inform us. But let us not make my Mother wait, Supper is now ready ; and as we shall be alone, I desire you will go down with me, the Count's Rival will not come this Evening, and I am not sorry for it, since I know not how I should have been able to conceal my Trouble and Confusion from him.

Supper

Supper being over, Mademoiselle *de Selnac* then resumed the Thread of her Story.

We left off, said she, at my proposing a Walk to Madam *de Vambel*: We went down into the Garden, and I related to her Mademoiselle *de Guspan's* Adventure, and my so unexpectedly meeting with Mr. *de Mouville* in the Garden. She was now, she said, no longer surpris'd at the President's Coldness, and it was wicked in you, added she, to leave him in an Error, which must render him so uneasy, and I will get acquainted with him, continued she, if it be only to undeceive him. I would not replied I, have you take that Trouble, by any Means, it is my Desire he should think he has Rivals; that will soon bring him to an Ecclaircissement with me.

We then saw Madam *de Guspan* and her Daughter, who were walking; the Count *de Zillman* accosted them, and met with a very indifferent Reception. He left them, passed us several times, and bowed but did not speak to us. Mr. *de Mouville* did the same, but perceiving Mademoiselle *de Guspan*,

Guspan, he joined her. Their Conversation seemed to flag at first, but it soon became more animated, and I found she spoke with great Emotion, whilst her Mother was conversing with two Ladies of her Acquaintance. The President listened with great Attention, and this was the Occasion of it.

She was giving him a Relation of our meeting with the Count *de Zillman*, in the Forest of *Saint Germain*; the Moment she first saw that Stranger, said she, she fell violently in Love with him, he made suitable Returns to her Passion, and they appointed a Meeting in the Garden of the *Palais Royal*, at two o'Clock in the Morning; a Letter which she dropped, let me into the Secret. I could not help telling her my Sentiments, of her Conduct, and it produced a Quarrel between us. I should not have made you acquainted with this, but on Account of the real Esteem I have for you, and because I see you have a tender Affection for a Coquette, who will not fail to make you miserable.

This

This was the Method taken by that jealous Girl, to blacken my Character, in the Opinion of the President *de Mouville*. Probably she was in Hopes, she might engage him to make Choice of her, by way of Consolation, for my pretended Infidelity, as such a Husband as Mr. *de Mouville*, would have soon made her forget the Count's Indifference.

Her Perfidy did not produce the wished for Effect. Her Tale did not diminish Mr. *de Mouville*'s Passion, tho' he had resolved, however, that he would try to forget me. He quitted her in great Disorder. Madam *de Vambel*, and I, returned home. We found there a numerous Company, and amongst others, Madam *de Falzac*, who gently reproved me, for not visiting her again. As she did not play at Cards, we had an Opportunity of talking together.

I turned the Conversation upon the Count *de Zillman*, and enquired if he would stay any considerable Time longer at *Paris*? She said, she believed not: That for some Days past he had appeared to be very
pensive,

pensive, and that his Melancholy was, probably, occasioned by some Letters, he had received, requiring his sudden Appearance in *Sweden*. She added, that she and her Husband should be very sorry to lose him.

The Thought of his Departure made me sigh, and I instantly blushed, at discovering such a Proof of my Weakness towards a Man, who had so little Value for me ; and I changed my Seat, in order to hide my Confusion.

I no longer doubted but that Mademoiselle *de Guspan's* Displeasure, was the chief Cause, both of his Melancholy and Departure. I could not comprehend how, compatibly with the Love he bore her, he could fail of meeting her, agreeable to her Appointment. But I was delighted I had set them at Variance. In a Word, I thought of nothing but him, and then grew sensible that I really loved him.

I no longer stifled my Sighs ; I thought no Person in the World so greatly merited Compassion as myself, who loved without
Hope

Hope of a Return : And indeed my Self-love was grievously hurt.

A thousand times did I envy the Happiness of Mademoiselle *de Guspan*, in pleasing the Count *de Zillman*; but spight of which, I had taken a firm Resolution to conceal my Sentiments from him. That Resolve filled me with Sadness, and gave me a Prospect of the greatest Anguish : Company was irksome to me : Several Persons would have engaged me in Conversation, and I answered them only in Monosyllables. I longed to be alone, that I might freely indulge my Reflections.

Madam *de Vambel*, who was looking over her Aunt's Cards, observing the deep Reverie I was in, came and sat down by me, and said, what have you lost Mademoiselle ? My Heart, answered I, with a low Voice, and under some Confusion. What do I hear, my dear *Leonora*, said she ! I thought you was incapable of being in Love. You are determined then, at last, to reward Mr. *de Mourville*, by crowning his Passion : It gives me great Pleasure, I assure you, for he really deserves it, and

I think you have made him suffer too much already.

You are mistaken, replied I, it is not Mr. *de Mowville* who is Master of my Heart; A much more amiable Man, but who, having treated me with the coldest Indifference, has rendered me the most wretched of Womankind. I can, hereafter, think of the President only as a troublesome Man. However, I must own, it would vex me, should he cease to love me, for tho' I do not, in the least, value his Affection, yet I would not part with him; nay, I don't know whether I would not even make him believe, I give him the Preference to all his Rivals.

As the Count *de Zillman* no longer pays his Addresses to Mademoiselle *de Guspan*, it will doubtless reach his Ear; Mankind are inconstant, perhaps I may please him: Then the President's Love will stand me in the greatest Stead: It will excite the Count's Jealousy, and throw into his Behaviour, and Conversation, a tender Vivacity, which, with infinite Concern, I have observed, he never once shewed me.

I thus

I thus opened the Secrets of my Heart to Madam *de Vambel*, who was about to make me a Reply, when a Footman brought the News of my Mother's Arrival. This Incident made me forget all my Grief, I had no Reason to expect her so soon, and the Pleasure of seeing her again, took up my whole Thoughts.

I went to meet her, and embraced her several times. Madam *d'Olmont* came to wait on her, and said, how greatly she was obliged to her, for leaving me with her, during her Absence; that I had saved her Life, and she should never forget it. My Mother, in her turn, thanked Madam *d'Olmont*, for the Care she had taken of me, and went into the Room amongst the Visitors, where she renewed her Acquaintance with Madam *de Falzac*, whom she had formerly some Knowledge of.

About nine o'Clock, my Mother finding herself a little fatigued, told Madam *d'Olmont* that she must return home, and take some Rest, and that she would free her from the Trouble, she must have had, in
looking

looking after one of my Age and Sex. Say rather, replied *Madam d'Olmont*, that in taking from me *Mademoiselle de Selnac*, you deprive me of my better half: I love her so dearly, that I could not prevail on myself to restore her to you, if it was not for the Hope of being often again favoured with her Company. At these Words, she extended her Arms and embraced me, with Tears in her Eyes, bidding me farewell.

Madam de Vambel, with whom I had contracted an intimate and sincere Friendship, could not leave me without Regret.

I was truly chagrined at our Separation, but my Grief was assuaged, when I reflected that I was returning to a Mother whom I greatly loved.



C H A P. XXII.

*Such is the Posie, Love composes ;
A stinging Nettle mix'd with Roses.*

BROWNE.

THE first Thing I did, the next Day, was to give my Mother an exact Account of all my Uneasinesses and Pleasures, during her Absence. Reserving only *Mademoiselle de Guspan's* Rendez-vous, I only said, there was a Misunderstanding between us, but for what Cause I knew not. I also concealed from her my Passion for the Count, as well as the Pain I had made *Mr. de Mouville* suffer. She enquired after him, I told her he was come back from *Lyons*, but I had scarce seen him since his Return. She concluded he would not fail coming the next Day, but she was mistaken.

Eight or ten Days passed, and we heard nothing of him. The Count *de Zillman*, whom I had painted to my Mother, in the finest, and at the same Time, the truest Colours, ceased also to visit us. We did not even meet him, either at *Madam d'Olmont's*,

216 *The RIVAL MOTHER.*

d'Olmont's, or *Madam de Falzac's*. We saw him several times in the Garden, but he did not vouchsafe to accost us.

I complained of it to *Madam de Vambel*, in a manner which convinced her I truly loved the Count. By way of Consolation, she flattered me with the Hope, that he would one Day, (as she worded it) do right to my Charms. She also assured me, he no longer visited *Mademoiselle de Guspan*, but that he and the *Chevalier de Barcell* were inseperable. This gave me some Uneasiness. Thereupon she put me in Mind, that the Count was a Foreigner, and your Mother, added she, will never consent to a Match, which will seperate you for ever. The President is much more suitable for you, and merits your Esteem and Affection.

To this wholesome Advice, I made no other Answer, but Sighs, which too evidently shewed, how little inclined I was to follow it; and when I parted with her, I was so greatly afflicted, that she could not help pitying me.

My *

My Mother, who found my Temper altered, could not guess the Cause of it. At first, she thought it was occasioned by the President's so industriously avoiding us. She told me her Suspicions, seemed greatly desirous to see him, and to learn from his own Mouth, the Motives for his absenting himself.

I said nothing to dissuade her from it, but assured her, it was very indifferent to me, whether I saw him or not. She thought I was troubled with the Vapours, and with a View to dissipate my Melancholy, she procured for me every Amusement and Diversion she could think of.

There was continually, a great deal of Company at our House, but nothing pleased me. *Madam de Vambel* was the only Person I could bear : I saw her almost every other Day, either at *Madam d'Olmont's*, or our own House.

I was deprived of that Satisfaction, at the very Time, when I could not possibly do without her. She could not be excused from attending her Aunt, who went to pass some Days, at an Estate she had,

near *Rochelle*, where her Presence was necessary.

I was so grieved at her Departure, that for some Days I saw no Company; and to complete my Misfortune, I was seized with the Small-pox. My Mother, terrified to the last Degree, to see me in so dangerous a Situation, resolved to attend me herself. The President *de Mouville* being informed of the Condition I was in, came immediately to our House, and with him Madam *de Mencour*, his Sister; my Mother ran to meet them, and told them what my Dis-temper was.

We are not afraid of it, Madam, answered the President, we intend to keep you Company, and I hope my Sister will not be quite useless to you. Madam *de Selnac* thankfully accepted so generous an Offer, and an Apartment was made ready for them. Mr. *de Mouville* would come into my Chamber, and was sensibly touched at my Condition. Notwithstanding my Disorder, I knew him again, and was amazed to see him, considering what had passed.

You

You cannot conceive how pleased I was, to find that his Love had got the better of the Fear, commonly inspired by that terrible Disease. But, at the same Time, I thought of the Count *de Zillman*, and Sighed, because his Sentiments so widely differed from those of the President *de Mouville*. During this Time, the President did not once offer to speak to me, but I could observe a deep Sadness on his Countenance. Having staid a Moment with me, he departed to seek for his Sister, whom he brought, almost immediately, into my Chamber. Madam *de Mencour* was a young Widow, of a very agreeable Person and Temper, she loved her Brother, and came out of pure Complacency, to shut herself up with us. My Mother and I gave her a thousand Thanks: She was not only very useful to us, but an exceeding good Companion, and found Means to divert me, by a Conversation full of Variety and Delight.

I was on the mending Hand, when one Day, my Mother being gone to her Closet, with Madam *de Mencour*, Mr. *de Mouville*

approached my Bed, to ask after my Health: I am much better said I, but it grieves me, to think what Havock the Small-pox will make in my Face. Ah! cried the President, too amiable *Leonora*, how can you regret the being deprived of a few Charms, and at the same Time not deplore the Loss of a Reputation, which ought to be infinitely more dear to you? Is it possible you should, to so great a Degree, have forgotten yourself? And that I must be forced to cease loving you? You, whom I looked on as the only Woman capable of making me happy! How can I ever look on you hereafter, since now, alas! the happy Count *de Zillman* is Master of your Heart! What has that fortunate Rival done, to win your Affections? His Love for you cannot be so sincere as mine, as he did not scruple engaging you to take a Step, which if once divulged, would disgrace you for ever: From me you have nothing to fear: But, can you, *Leonora*, be so sure of his Discretion?

This

This is insupportable, Sir, said I, immediately interrupting him, therefore I will undeceive you. I then ask you to hear me but a Moment, and I shall easily convince you, how greatly you injure me, by your Suspicions.

He consented. I then told him by what Accident I was at the Door, where he met me. In a Word, I made no Secret to him of the Inclination I had for the Count *de Zillman*. Assist me, said I, with your Counsel, he has hitherto treated me only with Indifference. I am sensible he is not worthy of a Heart like mine.

The President, in a Transport of Joy, fell on his Knees, took one of my Hands, which he pressed between his, and asked my Pardon a thousand times. He confessed in his turn, that the unjust Suspicions he had formed of me, were owing to the base Information which *Madam de Guspan* had given him, as a great Secret. And then, by an Effort of Generosity (of which he alone was capable) said to me, you are greatly to be pitied, my dear *Leonora*, I see you are in a terrible Situation!

You love without return! Alas! Such Beauty, joined to so much Merit, deserves a better Fate.

It shall be my Endeavour to make you more happy. Perhaps it may cost me my Life, but I ought to lay it at your Feet, without the least Murmuring, or Reluctance, if by that Means I could add but one happy Day to yours.

I will make an Acquaintance with my Rival, I will search out the Situation of his Heart, in your Respect, and I will even boast of your Perfections. If he seems touched with your Beauty, if he will promise to fix his Abode in *France*, I will then finish my Work: I will advise him to endeavour to gain your Love, and to ask *Madam de Selnac's* Consent to join your Hands; she will not be unpropitious to his Wishes. But when I shall have made this painful Effort, ask not again for me; nor ever bestow on me the smallest Token of your Remembrance. Adieu, *Leonora*, I go; To-morrow I shall leave you forever. I shall see the Count, and soon discover his Sentiments.

I was

I was so struck, at this generous Resolution, that I was unable to return him any Answer. I admired and pitied him. But still I could not help thinking, with Pleasure, that he would persuade the Count to love me. For I knew the President too well, to suspect he would fail of his Promise.

He was no sooner in his Chamber, than he went to Bed. In the Night he was taken very Ill, which obliged him to call up his Servants, who found him in a high Fever.

Madam *de Meneour* was greatly alarmed at it, and continually attended him.

At the End of eight Days he was judged to be out of Danger; and shortly afterwards, had no Remains of his Distemper, save a little Weakness. During the whole Course of his Illness, he would see only his Sister; and intreated, that my Mother and I might not visit him. We had no Design to incommode him; and, besides, I was not sorry he declined seeing me; for as I had no Thought of restoring his Health, by sacrificing the Count to him,

such an Interview would have greatly embarrassed me.

When he was recovered, he found I had no Inclination that he should visit me; he therefore took an Opportunity, when I was not with my Mother, to go to her Room and take his Leave of her. She was greatly surprised at the Resolution he had formed of quitting us so suddenly, and asked him the Cause of it; but he did not think proper to inform her of it.

Madam *de Mencour*, who did not think Mr. *de Mourville*'s Health was sufficiently re-established, for him to be left alone, departed with him.



C H A P. XXIII.

*Ev'n as one Heat another Heat expels,
Or, as one Nail, by Strength, drives out another,
So the Remembrance of my former Love,
Is, by a newer Object, quite forgotten.*

SHAKESPEAR.

SOME Time after we received Company, which my Mother was very fond of, but for my own Part, my Humour was so changed, that I wished only for Solitude. I frequently thought of *Madam de Vambel*, my Regret for her Absence equalled her Deserts. I heard from her every Week, and regularly corresponded with her. One Day, a Letter from her, was delivered to me, and I hastily opened it; it contained an Account of *Madam d'Olmont's* Death, which sincerely grieved me. She also informed me, that having a very convenient Opportunity, to go with her whole Family to the Isle of *Saint Domingo*, where her Mother lived, who was very old, and had for a long Time desired to see her, she should em-

L 5

brace

brace it; and stay there till that Lady's Death. That she had impowered one of her Relations to manage her Business during her Absence, and that she, and Mr. *de Vambel*, were very sorry they must go away, without seeing me.

Her Departure was a great Affliction to me; but judge you of my Grief, when I heard they were both drowned; the Ship they embarked on board, being lost almost in the Sight of *Rockelle*. This News increased my Melancholy.

In the mean Time, I waited with the greatest Impatience for the Effect of Mr. *de Mourville*'s Promises. I knew he had been seen several Times with the Count, and I was dying with Impatience, to know what passed between them.

One Evening, when I was alone, the President entered my Chamber, with a serious Look, but without the least Mixture of Sadness. I grew pale, and did not dare to lift up my Eyes.

Trembling I come, Madam, said he, to give you a faithful Account of the last Conversation I had with the Count *de Zillman*,

Zillman, but I fear the Relation of it will grieve you. For Heaven's sake, said I, conceal nothing from me! Well then, added he, the Count, fair *Leonora*, is still insensible to your Charms. I was so lucky as to gain his Friendship and Confidence. I hate him, because in your Eyes he appears too amiable, yet at the same time, I cannot help doing him the Justice, to own, that if his Love for you, equalled mine, he would deserve to be sole Master of your Heart.

With a View of inducing him to be frank and open, with respect to you, I made no Secret of my Passion for you. I gave him a faithful Description of your Character and Beauty. But, at the same Time, I let him know, that hopeless of moving you to Love, I was determined to fly from you.

I commend your Resolution, said the Count. *Mademoiselle de Selnac* can never make a worthy Man happy, she is a Coquette. I vainly endeavoured to justify you. But he was not convinced by my Reasons; and I must confess, I was not
forry.

sorry to see him persevere in his Opinion. Will you never, *Leonora*, banish from your Mind, a Man who repays your Love with such cold Indifference? I have now no Hopes left of convincing him. What then will you resolve to do? To hate him, answered I, and to do you the Justice I owe you. Ah! *Leonora*, replied he, I shall be blest indeed, if this Confession be not the Effect of angry Disappointment. Permit me therefore to engage Madam *de Selnac*, and you, to pass part of the Autumn, with my Sister, at her Country-House. I will not even whisper a Word of my Love, as it would perhaps be troublesome to you. It shall be my chief Care to dissipate your Grief, by every Diversion I can procure for you. If my perseverance at last, should move you, I shall, without Difficulty, perceive it. I will then ask your Mother's Consent, to make us one, and I flatter myself, she will not oppose my Happiness.

The President left me, proposed the Journey to my Mother, and she consented to it.

Three Days afterwards we set out, we found some very agreeable Company at the Marchioness's, where all breathed an Air of Gaiety and Freedom.

The first Evening passed very agreeably, we supped in a Grove lighted up by the help of several Lamps, placed amongst the Trees. Supper ended, Mr. *de Mouville* conducted us to another Part of the Grove, still more illuminated than the former. There was a Side-board furnished with Refreshments, and several Instruments striking up, denoted to us we were to have a Ball. The President and I opened it, and the Company danced all Night.

The succeeding Days brought new Pleasures. Mr. *de Mouville* from Time to Time, contrived some genteel Entertainment, with a View, the better to gain my Favour. I was at last moved at the great Assiduity and Fondness he shewed me, or at least I fancied I was. My melancholy Humour once left me, I was no longer blind to Mr. *de Mouville's* Merit. I considered how much he had done for me, and was so taken up with
the

the Diversions he had contrived purposely for my Amusement, that I scarce thought on the Count, and even wondered how I could be so greatly affected at his Indifference.

Mr. *de Mouville*, who perceived a Change was wrought in his Favour, could not, however, help fearing, that the Presence of the Count *de Zillman*, might one Day kindle again a Flame not thoroughly extinguished, and he freely owned to me his Apprehensions. You may make yourself very easy, said I, for your Suspicions are ill grounded; I could see the Count with the greatest Tranquillity and Indifference, pray invite him to pay us a Visit.

The Experiment was a little dangerous. However, it so nearly concerned the President, fully to know my real Sentiments, that he wrote to the Count, but he was returned to *Sweden*.

I was a little surprized at his Departure, but it did not give me the least Trouble. Mr. *de Mouville* was so delighted at the Calmness with which I received

ceived this News, that he could not contain his Joy.

From that Moment he seemed to be more enamoured, and more officious than ever. I gave him leave to mention to my Mother, the Resolution he had taken to marry me.

He found no Difficulty in obtaining her Consent. My Mother had a Value for him, as I have told you before. She could not find a better Match. And tho' she concluded I could be no Stranger to the Step taken by the President, yet she communicated it to me.

Madam *de Mencour* was also informed of it. The Marriage was made Public; and an universal Joy spread itself through the whole Castle.

Some Days afterwards, we returned to *Paris*. Mr. *de Mouville* never left me: and I thought him really amiable. His Sister gave me convincing Proofs of her Kindness towards me. In a Word, I had the greatest Reason to be perfectly satisfied.

My

My Mother had determined, I should be married one Day during the Carnaval, which was about three Weeks after, and which seemed an Age to the President *de Mouville*. For my Part, the Time did not hang heavy upon my Hands. I was every Evening at the Play, or at an Assembly at some Friend's House. The Eve of the Day I was to be married to Mr. *de Mouville*, I went to a Masquerade with my Mother, Madam *de Mencour*, the President, and several of his Relations. I had a very rich Dress on. After having walked several Times round the Room, I wanted to sit down. I could get no Seat by my Mother, but a Person who was upon another Bench, offering me her Place, I accepted it. Mr. *de Mouville* then left me alone. Near me was a Masque who kept a profound Silence. Being piqued to find him take no Notice of me, I accosted him with an *I know you*, to get him to speak. The sound of my Voice roused him from his Reverie, he made me a slight Answer, and cried out, good Heavens! how unhappy am I!

He

He viewed me in so earnest a Manner, that I was quite out of Countenance. I got up to go away, but he prevented me; Stay, said he to me, with a faltering Voice, (and which I thought I had somewhere heard before) Stay, *Leonora*, and see the wretched Condition you have reduced me to. I am the Count *de Zillman*. I have ever loved you, but hopeless of a Return, and prejudiced against you by an artful Misrepresentation of your Character, which for base Ends was instilled into me at the very Infancy of my Acquaintance with you, I had formed the Resolution of returning to *Sweden*. But Love has forced me back again.

Fate has decreed that I must ever Love you. Through the Influence of my cruel Destiny, Mademoiselle *de Guspan* has just confessed to me every base and wicked Artifice contrived, by her and the Chevalier *de Barcell*, to blast your Honour and make you vile in my Esteem: At these Words Mr. *de Mouville* appeared, and the Count had only Time to beg I would give him an Opportunity of talking with
me

234 *The RIVAL MOTHER.*

me for a Moment. I immediately retired, under pretence of a slight Indisposition, and the Company followed me.

On my Return home, I told my Mother I was better; she left me in my Chamber, and went to Bed. The whole Night I did not close my Eyes to sleep. The Sight of the Count, and his Discourse, had reanimated a Passion, which was but ill extinguished. The Thought of entering into *Hymen's* Bands with the President, then filled me with Horror, and I resolved to anticipate the fatal Moment. I packed up a few Necessaries, sent for a Coach at Day-break, which conveyed me to a Nunnery where I had some Acquaintance.

Being arrived there, I desired to speak with the Abbess, and told her I was determined to assume the Habit of the Order. My Friends, added I, have proposed Marriage to me; but I am not fit for that State; and should I enter into it, I fear I should run a great Risque of my Salvation. Therefore, dear Madam, give proper Directions, I entreat you, that my Mother
may

may not see me. Her Tenderneſs for me, and her Reproaches, would probably prove an Obſtacle to the Deſign I am fully bent on executing. I can, without her Aſſiſtance, pay you my Portion.

I then ſhewed her the Jewels given me by Madam *d'Olmont*, which were worth about ten Thouſand Crowns. I added, that before I entered upon my Probation, I would willingly ſtay five or fix Months in the Convent, by way of Trial.

She conſented to my Requeſt, opened the Door, embraced me, and promiſed that God would ſhower down on me a double Portion of his Grace, infinitely more comfortable than all the Treasures in the World. She then conducted me to the neateſt and moſt convenient Chamber in the Convent, and ordered I ſhould be furniſhed with every thing I wanted.

C H A P. XXIV.

*Know of your Youth, examine well your Blood.
Whether you can endure the Liv'ry of a Nun;
For Aye to be in shady Cloisters mew'd,
To live a barren Sister all your Life,
Chaunting faint Hymns to the cold fruitless Moon.*

SHAKESPEAR.

WHILST They were rejoicing for my Arrival, in that Community, my Mother was a Prey to Grief and Despair. She came pretty early in the Morning into my Chamber, and found upon the Table a Letter, in which I informed her, that a violent Disgust of the World forced me to retire to a Convent. That it was my present Opinion a religious Life must be the happiest; and therefore I intreated she would not oppose my Inclination, or ever mention to me any other Engagement. That I still entertained the highest Esteem and greatest Friendship for Mr. *de Mouville*, but could never consent to be his Wife. In the End, however, I promised and assured

assured her, that, notwithstanding my Resolution of being a Nun, I would never take the Vow without her Consent.

This Letter made her shed a Flood of Tears ; she sent for Mr. *de Mouvill*e, who was full as much amazed at a Resolution he had so little Reason to expect. In hopes of discovering the Place of my Retreat, they sent for all the Hackney-Coachmen in the Neighbourhood, and enquired if they had not carried a young Lady to a Nunnery ? and by that means, found out the Coachman who drove me. From whom having learned the Place where I was set down, they came and asked for the Abbess, spoke to her at first with great Politeness, and desired she would prevail on me to leave the House, or at least to come down into the Parlour. But they obtained neither of their Requests. They then lost all Temper, and threatened the Lady Abbess that they would make her feel the Effects of their Resentment ; but as she was of high Birth, and had great Interest, she was not afraid of their Menaces : She told them
her

her House was a sacred Afylum, whence I should never depart against my Will. That I came with a Design to settle there, and so long as I should persist in Resolutions so salutary, she would protect and keep me, spight of all Opposition.

This Answer threw my Mother into an inexpressible Fury. She returned home, and wrote to me every thing her Displeasure could dictate, but concluded with the most earnest Intreaties to quit the Convent. Mr. *de Mouville* also sent me a Letter, wherein he described, in the most tender and moving Terms, the Excess of his Grief. I plainly perceive, added he, that spight of all your Resolves, you still love the Count. My sole Aim has been to make you happy, and I will give you the most convincing Proof of it. I will fly from *Paris*, that I may leave you the free Mistress of your Fate.

The reiterated Perusal of these Letters, gave me a lively Sense of my Ingratitude. I was upon the Point of returning home, thereby to restore Peace of Mind to a Mother, and a Lover, whom I had already
ready

ready but too much afflicted. But the Idea of the Count *de Zillman*, stopped my doubtful Steps. I thought that in quitting the Convent I should throw myself into the Arms of his Rival, and thereby forever deprive myself of the Hope of being his. Besides, I thought it would be shameful to appear again so soon after the Noise I had made.

I therefore stayed, and rested satisfied with returning her a dutiful Answer. I earnestly entreated she would permit me to continue only six Months in the Convent, after which Time I would return to her if she commanded it. I also wrote a Line to Mr. *de Mourville* to assure him I did not hate him, But that I truly pitied him, and could not forgive myself for my ill Usage of him. I made not the least Attempt to divert him from his Resolution of leaving *Paris*. He saw it, and had no sooner read my Letter, than he embraced my Mother with Tears in his Eyes, and bid adieu to his Sister; after which he got into his Post-Chaise, and, attended

attended by his Servants, set out for *Lyons*.

My Mother resolved not to disturb me in my Solitude during the Term I had asked of her. Her Friends came to condole with her, and my Retreat was a Secret to none. My Acquaintance of both Sexes were to the last Degree astonished, to think I should be seized with a Longing to become a Nun, the very Moment I was going from a Masquerade, and even the very Eve of the Day I was to wed Mr. *de Mowville*. They suspected I had a secret Passion for some other Person, and I became the Subject of every Conversation in *Paris*, as well as of the Sisterhood in our Convent. Those Devotees were continually blessing themselves at my Conversion, which had been worked the very Time the Demon was putting in Practice his most powerful Temptations to ensnare me; though could they have viewed my undisguised Heart, how great had been their Surprise! for under an Appearance of Tranquillity, I concealed an ardent Passion, which grievously tormented

mented me; and the Impossibility I was under of seeing the Count, caused me a thousand secret Disquietudes.

My Thoughts were wholly taken up with him, when I perceived *Mademoiselle de Guspan* in the Garden; she having retired to the same Convent. The Loss of her Mother made her take that Resolution. She also saw me, and ran and fell on my Neck. Great are the Injuries I have done you, my dear *Leonora*, said she, and the Misfortunes I have lately suffered, have given me a thorough Sense of my Conduct. The Baseness, of my Behaviour to you makes me tremble; and my torturing Remorse is insupportable. I found out the Count *de Zillman*, who is lately returned, and thought it my indispensable Duty to make a full Confession of the wicked Artifices put in Practice by the *Chevalier de Barcell* and myself, to give him the most disadvantageous Opinion of your Conduct. Dare I to hope you will forget so long a Series of Wrongs? Restore, I beseech you, to my troubled Mind, the Calm I now so greatly

stand in need of, for hither I came fully determined to dedicate myself to God.

A Flood of Tears, which then fell from her Eyes, moved me to Compassion, I embraced her, and promised her an eternal Friendship.

One Day as I was at Sermon, and seated near the Grate, I saw the Count in the Chapel. The Sight of him (as I did not expect it) threw me into great Confusion. He had taken his Stand just opposite the Place where I was sitting. Our Eyes exactly met, he dared not then openly take any Notice of me, but his Looks, full of Love, plainly told me a Part of his Sentiments.

He approached the Grate, the Moment I was going to draw the Curtain, dexterously slipped a Letter into my Hand, and went directly out of the Chapel. I flew to my Chamber, impatient to peruse the Contents of it. He therein conjured me to procure the Means of a private Interview between us; and let me know he would come again the next Day, and take the same Stand which he had done before,

before, in the Hope to be informed of the Time and Place, when and where he might converse with me. And I was too eager to hear what he had to say to me, to deny his Request.

The Favour of the Abbess, and the Regularity of my Conduct, had given me a Right to certain Indulgences, which would not have been granted to many others, since I was permitted to go unaccompanied to the Parlour.

The following Day I went to the Grate, but the Count was at his Post before me. I found Means to tell him, that he might come and ask to speak with me. Soon after, Word was brought me that a young Gentleman, who was my Relation, desired to see me, and I went trembling to meet him.

I come, said he, most amiable *Leonora*, to fall prostrate at your Feet; the Manner in which I have behaved to you merits your highest Indignation, But Mademoiselle *de Guspan* is the Cause of all my Woe. I hastily interrupted him. Mademoiselle *de Guspan*, said I, has told me all that is

passed. I restore to you my Esteem, therefore now do all in your Power to engage my Mother to favour your Pretensions. I forthwith left him, imagining after so plain a Confession, it would not be proper for me to stay and hear his Answer.

The next Day I received a Letter from one of my Aunts, who informed me my Mother was extremely ill, that she was desirous to see me, and would send her Coach and Woman on the Morrow to fetch me. This News greatly afflicted me, I told the Abbess of it, who was very sorry at my Departure; and exhorted me to persevere in the Resolution I had formed of quitting the World. I promised to pay due Regard to her Advice.

It was soon known in the Convent that I was going away. It greatly grieved Mademoiselle *de Guspan*, who told me she was sure my Mother would never suffer me to return.

C H A P. XXV.

*Are then the Joys of this blest Meeting dash'd
So soon, so soon will Fortune snatch thee from me,
And mock my vain Embrace?*

TRAPP.

THE next Day the Coach came for me, and conveyed me to my Mother, whom I found a little better. I asked Pardon for my Conduct, and freely owned that I went away from her, only because I could not prevail upon myself to marry Mr. *de Mouville*. You have afflicted me beyond all Expression, my Dear, said she, but I now forgive you, hoping it is the last Time I shall suffer on your Account. I embraced her, and assured her, I would never, for the future, give her any Cause to complain of me.

Her Indisposition was of no long Continuance, for by the help of timely Assistance, she got the better of it in three or four Days, except that she was still very faint and weak.

M 3

So

As soon as my Mother was able to see Company, all her Friends came to wish her Joy of the double Recovery of me and her Health. Madam *de Falzac* was one of the first to visit her. She came one Day unexpectedly, to introduce the Count to my Mother, and told her she could not help bestowing her Friendship on a Gentleman, who had saved the Lives of Madam *d'Olmont*, Mademoiselle *de Guspan* and me, in the Forest of *Saint Germain*. My Mother gave him a very courteous Reception, and told him she thought he was at *Stockholm*. He answered, that he had been arrived but very few Days; and he had so great Command of himself, that he did not drop the least Word that could give a Suspicion of his having seen me since his Return. Some Glances, indeed, which he could not forbear, convinced me of the Situation of his Heart.

We had afterwards frequent Opportunities of conversing with each other. He came almost every Day to our House, to make one of my Mother's Party (to whom he shewed the greatest Respect). All Thoughts

Thoughts of a Convent were now given over. My Mother had several Times declared to all her Friends, that my Return thither would give her her Death's Wound. They could not therefore blame me for having too hastily changed my Resolution of becoming a Nun. When the Count was absent, I sometimes appeared thoughtful and melancholy, and they did me the Favour to attribute it solely to my Inclination for a Nunnery. Even my Mother did not suspect any other Cause. She often told me, that to see me well married, would be the greatest Happiness that could befall her, as it would put an End to her Fears of losing me.

I therefore resolved to give the Count leave to declare himself, and so much the more, as I found my Mother thought him a very agreeable Man. He himself ardently wished it, and only waited for my Permission. I told him then, that he might make his Offer as soon as he thought fit.

He took his Opportunity when I was visiting at a Friend's House, and waited on my Mother, who was alone. After

having tried, by the most powerful Language, to obtain her Consent to his Request, he owned to her that he loved me more than Life, and, in order to gain me, repeated to her the Account he had already given *me* of his Estate, and the Resolution he had formed of never returning to his own Country. My Mother, amazed, at what she heard, thanked him for the Honour he proposed to do me, but gave him no Promise: She told him she could not give him her Word, without previously knowing my Sentiments.

The Count, dissatisfied that he could not immediately obtain what he so earnestly wished for, took his leave full of Melancholy. I came home a Moment after, a little uneasy about what Answer my Mother had given him. She sent for me to her Closet, whither I went trembling every Joint.

Come hither, my Dear, said she, I have something to say to you. The Count *de Zillman* is just gone away, he has declared a Passion for you, and offered to marry you. He is (as I think, I need not tell you)

you) amiable, rich, and of a very great Family. Tell me, therefore, if you will consent to give him your Hand, in Compliance with his earnest Request?

These Words made me conclude, that my Mother only waited for my Consent, which so filled me with Joy, that I could scarce conceal it.

And yet I took a Fancy that I would be urged, and intreated by my Mother, to grant to the Count, what I wished for, as much as *he* did: I therefore told her, she well knew, that the Fear of parting with my Liberty, had occasioned me to break off with Mr. *de Mourville*; and that I still had a great Aversion to Matrimony: However, that I would consent to marry Mr. *Zillman*, if she was pleased to command me, for I could not forgive myself for the Uneasiness she had already suffered on my Account.

I lay my Commands on you, my dear *Leonora*, said she? No, I will never impose any, that can be in the least painful, or disagreeable to you. I wanted to know your Sentiments, with regard to the Count,

and should have been sorry if your Inclinations had led you to give a ready Consent to his Proposal. I could not have prevailed on myself to have joined you with a Man, who being a Foreigner, would have had it in his Power to deprive me of you.

He may pretend he will never leave *Paris*, but I cannot believe him. It is a Promise, only made with a View to obtain you, and which he will break, the first Moment he has it in his Power. In short, tho' I have a great Value for him, and am persuaded we shall never meet with a Match so much to your Advantage, he shall never be your Husband, so long as I live.

When my Mother had thus explained her Mind, she went to wait upon some Visitors, who were just come. I went to my Chamber, far from being so well pleased as to follow her. The Count, when he left our House, came to that where I had spent the Day, in Hopes of meeting me; but as I was gone, he returned, and ascended to my Chamber, where they informed

formed him I was; and at Sight of me, he concluded we had both been too sanguine in our Hopes.

And must I then, dear *Leonora*, said he, be deprived of the Happiness of possessing you! As far as I see, neither my Entreaties, my Love, nor my Promise to *Madam de Selnac*, have made the least Impression upon her Mind. Thro' what Caprice are you denied to my fond Wishes? Am I of more ignoble Birth, or less stored with Riches, than the President *de Mouville*?

She does you Justice, answered I sighing: But is so firmly persuaded you will not stay in *France*, that she will never consent to unite us. It is true, she loves me, but when she has taken a Resolution, nothing can prevail on her to change it. How unhappy am I, cried the Count! And must I lose you, and that solely thro' the Obstinacy of a Mother, who you say, tenderly loves you? If she has so great an Affection for you, why does she oppose your Desires? Would she have me bind myself under a Penalty, that I will never separate you from her, I am ready
to

to do it, and to give her the best Part of my Estate, and even of my Blood, to make you mine.

At the Conclusion of these Words, he fell at my Feet, took one of my Hands, which I could not prevent him from kissing, and uttered every tender Expression, his Passion could dictate, to convince me how greatly he loved me, and how much he was to be pitied. My Mother entered the Chamber that Moment, and seemed displeased, as well to find us alone together, as at the Attitude he was in. Her Presence confounded me, but at last I went up to her, and freely owned my Love for the Count. This Confession, far from moving her to Compassion, increased her Anger. She told me I was unworthy her Favour, since I could so readily come to a Resolution of leaving her. We attempted to undeceive her, but she would not hear a Word, and told the Count, she was obliged to him for the Honour he had designed us, but that she could not possibly accept it; wherefore she desired he would forbear visiting

visiting us for the future, as his Presence would only keep alive, Sentiments which she could by no Means be pleased with.

After this Speech, which I thought a very unkind one, she bid me go down with her. I obeyed, but could not possibly hide my Grief.

As for the Count, he returned, his Heart big with Concern, to tell Mr. and Madam *de Falzac*, to what a depth of Despair he was sunk. Madam *de Falzac* once again visited my Mother, in Hopes of prevailing on her, to give her Consent, but without the least Success.

My Mother was several Days without speaking to me. I kept as profound a Silence, and, under Pretence of some slight Indisposition (which she was not sorry for) I declined going into Company. For this Reason, I had not the least Intelligence of the Count. I only heard by my Chamber-Maid, that she had several times seen him go into the House of an eminent Painter, to whom my Mother had sent my Picture, in order to have it mended.

I con-

I concluded, he went there only to procure a Copy of it; and I was afterwards informed by the same Servant, who knew the Limner, that I was not mistaken: And he had caused one to be drawn in Miniature, which was very like me.

Eight Days were already passed, since I had seen the Count, tho' he had watched every Opportunity for that Purpose: When one Morning, being at Church, with my Mother, the Viscount *de Chanfanne*, who was there also, came up to her, and told her, that the Chevalier *de Barcell*, had, the Moment before, been killed by the Count *de Zillman*. Ah! What occasioned them to fight, asked my Mother, greatly surprized? Something that was said by the Chevalier, but I know not what it was, answered Mr. *de Chanfanne*: The Count is slightly wounded, but it is said, he has made his Escape, and he has acted very wisely, for it turns out to be a formal Duel, and the Chevalier's Relations, who you know are powerful, are bent on his Destruction.

I am

I am sorry for him, said my Mother, and heartily wish him well. As he is universally beloved, I am certain many Persons will use all their Interest to obtain his Pardon. As to the Chevalier *de Barcell*, added she, he was a bad Man, and I believe nobody will much regret his Loss.

During this Discourse, I spoke not a Word, but was rather *dead* than *living*: I imagined they had fought on my Account. I accused myself as the Author of the Chevalier's Death, and was alarmed at the Wound and Absence of the Count; and in a Word, I was overwhelmed with such a Croud of melancholy Ideas, that I was suddenly taken ill. My Mother, who perceived it, brought me Home, and without saying a Word, left me in my Chamber. So soon as I was alone, my Maid informed me, that the Count *de Zillman* had been at our House: That being obliged to leave *Paris*, with the greatest Speed, he dared not wait for my Return, to bid me Adieu: And that he departed under the greatest Affliction, by Reason he could not see me. She added, that he looked
fo

so pale and dejected, she feared he would not have Strength to bear the Fatigue of a Journey.

I was so moved, at the Regard shewn me by the Count, at a Time, when he might have been excused, for thinking only of his own Safety, that I could not help giving Way to the most lively Grief.

My Mother, who knew the Affliction I was under, and who was made easy, by the Count's Absence, attempted to comfort me. For the first Time in my Life, I answered her with an Indifferency, for which I shall always condemn myself. She sent to Madam *de Falzac*, and begged the Favour of her Company, and she came: My Mother left us together, and went out.

I found this Lady so grieved at the Count's Departure, that her Presence was a kind of Relief to me; we talked of him the whole Day; and, as I was desirous of knowing the Particulars of the Combat, she informed me, she had learned, from the Count, that, having met the Chevalier *de Barcell*, opposite the *Thuilleries*, with
one

one of his Friends, he had reproached him for the base Artifices he had used, to ruin my Character; that the latter attempted to turn off what the Count said, with a Laugh; but that the Count, vexed at the Manner in which the Chevalier answered him, told him they must, of Necessity, come to a more serious Explanation; and that if he had Spirit enough, he should follow him that Moment: That if he declined it, he knew well where to meet with him, and would shew him how a cowardly Slanderer ought to be treated; that the Chevalier, not being alone, could not refuse the Challenge, and had followed him; that the Count, who was crossing the *Thuilleries*, with great Unconcern, had met his Friend, the Marquis *de Blefemont*, who was come to *Paris*, for some Days; that he told him what had fallen out; that he entrusted to his Care a Casket, and having embraced him, departed from him, and overtook the Chevalier *de Barcell*, with whom he went out of the Garden. That the latter would not go far, but in a Passion drew his Sword; that the Count defended

defended himself with great Coolness, and presence of Mind, and at last gave his Adversary a Thrust, which deprived him of Life. Madam *de Falzac* added, that the Count had determined to quit the Kingdom, with the utmost Expedition. For fear, lest the Chevalier's Footman, who was Witness to their Quarrel, and a Spectator of the Combat, should declare, in what Manner the Affair had passed, and it should thereby become easy, to prove it was a set Duel.

During this Narrative, said Mademoiselle *de Selnac*, I felt the most poignant Grief, which continually tormented me; and I was firmly persuaded, that it could by no Means, ever be dissipated. However, Time restored my Quiet. After having passed several Months, insensible to any Pleasure, but, that alone, of thinking on the Count *de Zillman*, and reading over the Letters he wrote, to Mr. and Madam *de Falzac*, I was informed, by that Friend, who had received one from a Servant of the Count's, that he was sick in *Sweden*; that upon a false Accusation, the

the King had confined him in a Castle, which served as a Jail for State Prisoners ; that the greatest Part of his Estate was confiscated, and in short, that there was not the least probability, he would ever be released from that dismal Place, or be so fortunate as to see *France* again. This News raised my Affliction to the highest Pitch ; but, as I was hopeless of ever seeing him again, it insensibly diminished. I did not afterwards, hear the least mention made of him, for Mr. *de Falzac* and his Wife died almost at the same Time of the Small Pox.

This was not the last Misfortune I had to undergo. My Mother was cast in a Law-Suit, which deprived her of the best Part of her Estate. She was so affected, at the Prejudice I should suffer, from this Loss, that it almost killed her. But I had the good Fortune again, to see her get over the Danger, at a Time when I could scarce hope it. The unhappy Situation we were reduced to, by this Law-Suit, obliged us to leave *Paris*, where we could

could no longer make the same Figure as we had done.

C H A P. XXVI.

----- *Devotion in Distress*
Is born, but vanishes in Happiness.

DRYDEN.

ABOUT this Time, we heard that the President *de Mouville* had taken a Resolution of travelling to *Italy*, in order to divert the Grief he felt on my Account.

We came to fix our Residence in this Town, and inhabit a House that belonged to us. The greatest Part of our Servants were dismissed, and our Equipage laid down; and my Mother and I, were forced to live with an Œconomy, we had, till that Time, been Strangers to.

Two Years passed away, and we had not the least Prospect of seeing our Condition bettered. Our Misfortunes, which seemed to be remediless, had made a great Alteration, both in my Temper and Person. I longed only for Solitude, and avoided
 Diver-

Diversions. As I had been always used to the politest Company, I could scarce bear the Conversation and Behaviour of my Country Acquaintance. I found a Chasm in my Heart, which made me horribly uneasy; and I could not meet with any one, in the whole Province, capable of making me Amends for the Count *de Zillman's* Absence. In this melancholy Situation, I imagined Devotion the best Medicine, capable to alleviate my Grief; and it so strongly possessed my Fancy, that I thought the Days were not long enough to perform the Duties it enjoined me.

I rose early every Morning, and went to Church, where I stayed to the very utmost Moment. I was continually meditating on the Afflictions of *this* Life, and the infinite Blessings promised us, in *that* to come: I ardently wished for them. And now, *nor Purple, nor ought that had before delighted me, was pleasing.* In short, I was no longer a Woman of this World, and wished to continue in the same Disposition my whole Life. But you will soon see how greatly I was mistaken.

I had

I had followed this new Course of Life about six Months, when going one Evening to the Service, performed here by the Missionaries, I was accosted by a young Woman, who passes for a Model of Piety. She told me, she had somewhat of great Consequence to impart to me, and desired I would go to her House. I readily consented, knowing her too well, to suspect any Danger in accompanying her.

When I arrived there, she informed me, that the Reason why she had engaged me to come, was to propose an advantageous Match to me.

That God, who was doubtless well pleased, I should be sanctified, in the State of Matrimony, had inspired a young Gentleman, in the Neighbourhood, who was very rich, and of a good Family, with an ardent Love for me ; that he had made her the Confident of his Passion, and had earnestly entreated, she would undertake to sound me, whether he might hope, being Master of so large a Fortune, one Day to become my Husband? He will not open his Mind to you himself, nor even
wait

wait upon you, added the young Woman; for knowing how very retired a Life you lead, he is afraid, you will give him a Denial. But if you accept his Offer, I will bring him, this Evening, to *Madam de Selnac*, that you may talk over Matters between you. I have moreover, the Pleasure to assure you, added she, that you will not run the least Risque, in consenting to this Match, for the young Gentleman's Merit, is at least, equal to his Love.

This Proposal greatly amazed me; I did not know any Person, either in the Town, or Neighbourhood of it, that was possessed of a considerable Estate, and plainly hinted to her my Doubt about it: She told me, that the Person in question, commonly resided at an Estate of his own, a great Distance from our Part of the Country: That he came by Chance to this Town; that smitten with my Beauty, as well as charmed with my prudent, and virtuous Behaviour, he had a strong Desire to make me his Wife: And, that a hearty Inclination, to contribute all in her Power, towards making me happy, was
the

the sole Motive for undertaking that Affair.

I thanked her for her Good-will, and after a Moment's Reflection, consented that she should introduce him privately, to our House, as soon as she pleased. I added, that tho' I seemed to accept her Proposal, she must not, from thence, conclude, I was determined, at all Events, to close with the Offer he intended to make me. For, tho' his great Estate had given a new Birth, to my Inclination, of appearing again in the World, with as much Lustre as I had formerly done, yet I did not find, I had the least Inclination to give up my Liberty, to any Man whatsoever, for whom I could not entertain an Affection.

On my return Home, I acquainted my Mother with what had passed. She was, at first, equally pleased and surprized at it, though after a little Reflection, she expressed her Fears, that the Account given me, had been a little exaggerated. However, upon the whole, she was of Opinion, we might safely see the Incognito for once.

And

And we waited for the next Day, with the utmost Impatience.

It was past seven o'Clock, and neither the Lover, or his Confident appeared. I was Laughing with my Mother about it, when I heard somebody knock at the Door. They are come, said she; I looked out, and saw they were the Persons we expected. I was suddenly seized with such a Tremor, that it obliged me to sit down.

My Mother, well pleased at the Arrival of her future Son-in-Law, cast a hasty Glance over my Dress, to see if all was right, and told me, plain as it was, it did not ill become me. She advised me, by no Means, to let my Admirer slip thro' my Hands, if he was worth the keeping; at which Time, the Door of the Room was opened. No sooner had I cast my Eyes on the Person, who was entering the Room, than I screamed out.

Is it Horror or Amaze, which the Sight of me inspires my *Leonora* with, said Mr. *Mourville*, approaching me, that now causes this Emotion in her? If Hatred is the Cause of it, make yourself easy, for I come

to make you an Offer of my Estate, without requiring the least return, that may be any ways displeasing to you. My Mother, that Instant, ran to embrace him, her Eyes overflowing with Tears. I plainly see, said she, all Mr. *de Morville*, in this generous Conduct: Then do not disdain, continued she, to receive a Proof of Friendship and Affection, from one, who has always passionately wished to call you her Son, but, who now, scarce dared to breath the same Wish, for fear, the unhappy Condition you find her in, wou'd induce you to believe, that *Interest* is the principal Motive to it. Dear Madam, he reply'd, how happy should I be, if you would honour me with a Name, to obtain which, has been the chief Object of my Wishes! Permit me to enquire of Mademoiselle *de Selnac*, if I may presume to entertain the flattering Hope, that she will be one Day mine? Yes, I do readily permit you, said my Mother, and I hope, after so signal a Perseverance, my Daughter will do you ample Justice. The only Thing I am grieved at, is, that she has it no longer

longer in her Power, to offer you, together with her Heart and Hand, the Fortune she had two Years ago.

I want it not, Madam, said the generous *Mouville*, my own is sufficient. I have a due Sense of your noble Behaviour, said my Mother, but I have so strong a Desire of being informed, to what lucky Accident I am indebted for the Happiness of seeing you, I cannot help suspending the Proofs of my Gratitude. Tell me therefore, my dear Son, added she, how it happens, that after two Years Silence, we have the Pleasure of now seeing you again? I will obey your Commands, said *Mr. de Mouville*.

You know, Madam, that spight of *Mademoiselle de Selnac's* Disdain, I have always tenderly loved her. When I last quitted *Paris*, no Man ever felt a more violent Affliction, or was possessed with a stronger Passion than I. However, I resolved never to see her more, and proposed, if possible, to eradicate her from my Memory. With that View, I determined to travel; and chose *Italy*, as more

proper than any other Country, to divert my Melancholy. I informed none of my Friends of the Towns where I intended to make any stay at, so that consequently they could not write to me. With my Sister, indeed, I settled a Correspondence, but it was with this Restriction, that she should never mention any Thing to me, but what related to herself, or indifferent Matters; and that she should never inform me of any Thing, which might recal to my Mind, the Remembrance of that which had occasioned my Absence.

She punctually complied with my Request, so that I heard no more of you. But all these Precautions did not prevent me, from thinking of the ungrateful *Leonora*; and I was even, more than once, tempted to take Post-Horses, and return to her. But the Idea I had conceived, that she was in the Arms of a happier Man than myself, prevented me. In a Word, about six Weeks ago, I received a Letter from my Sister, in which she informed me, that she had made a Conquest of a Man, who was amiable, young,
of

of a great Family, and very rich; that he was desirous of being my Brother-in-Law, and before she came to a Resolution, she wished I would see her Lover, and confirm her Choice by my Approbation; that she should therefore expect me, and hoped I would not delay my Return.

C H A P. XXVII.

*Marriage to Maids, is like a War to Men;
The Battle Causes Fear, but the Sweet Hope
Of winning at the last, still draws them in.*

LEE.

I Plainly perceived from this Letter, that every thing was agreed on between my Sister and her Lover, and that she was only desirous I should be present at her Nuptials. I have a sincere Love for my Sister, and yet I must freely own, that the satisfying her Request was not the *Sole* Motive to my Return. The Hope of once more seeing Mademoiselle *de Selnac*, induced me to set out, spight of the Pains I foresaw she would still make me suffer.

My Arrival at *Paris* filled my Sister with the greatest Joy ; I could not help approving her Choice, for the Marquis *de Mesval* is a Man of Merit, and his only Fault is that he is Thoughtful and Absent.

The Marriage was celebrated without Delay, and the new married Couple passed fifteen Days in the Country, whither I accompanied them ; in the mean-time, I had the greatest Impatience to enquire after Mademoiselle *de Selnac*. My Sister observed it, and avoided mentioning it to me, for fear of tearing open a Wound which she thought was not yet well cured. One Day, as we were walking in an Avenue, in her Park, where I had often enjoyed the Happiness of conversing with *Leonora*, I could no longer resist the Inclination I had of enquiring into her Situation. My Sister, who was sensible nothing could please me better than a Conversation upon that Subject, related to me all your Misfortunes, and pityed you like a sincere Friend. This News, which I did not expect to have heard, was so far from disquieting me, that I must own, it
afforded

afforded me Comfort, and left me some Hopes. I confessed to my Sister, the strong Desire I had to see you; upon which she told me you did not live in *Paris*, but that she was immediately to set out to see one of her Husband's Relations, whose Castle was but four Leagues from hence, and, if I pleased, I should accompany her: I consented, and we departed a few Days afterwards. We arrived at the Lady's House, and my Sister and her Husband went to view a fine Estate which was put up for Sale, and which they made a Purchase of. As the Castle was ready furnished, they took Possession of it three Days ago, with a Design to stay a Week or a Fortnight there. I was quite delighted with it, because I was nearer the sole Object of my Affections. I did not stay to view the Beauties of the Situation, but came hither immediately. As I entered the Town, I met Mademoiselle *Duris*, Niece to one of my Sister's Women, whom I easily recollected. I asked her many Questions

272 *The RIVAL MOTHER.*

concerning you, and among other things, she told me, that Mademoiselle *de Selnac* was become a zealous Devotee. In short, she made me acquainted with all I wanted to know. And, believing her to be discreet, I entrusted her with the Secret of my Passion for the amiable *Leonora*, as well as of the Resolution I had taken, moved, as I was, at her present Situation, of making her happy if she would consent to it. But, previous to the making any Proposal either to you or her, being desirous of knowing whether she had any Dislike to the State of Matrimony, I desired she would propose me to Mademoiselle *de Selnac*, as an agreeable Man of a large Fortune, but by no Means to tell my Name. She managed the Business to my Satisfaction, and I had the Pleasure to hear that your Daughter, unmoved at the Riches I had caused to be offered to her, had declared she would never marry a Man she had not a real Esteem for. Being charmed with this Answer, I could no longer delay the Happiness of seeing you. She brought me hither:
and

and I am transported with Joy, again to behold two Persons so infinitely dear to me : The only thing that still alarms me, is, my fear lest *Leonora* should, at last, refuse to crown my Perseverance.

I must speak a Word or two to *Maiselle Duris*, said my Mother, therefore I must leave you a little while with my Daughter.

I was for a Moment speechless, at the being left alone with the very Man I had so greatly injured. And yet the Love, which I so plainly read in his Looks ; the Remembrance of what he had done for me ; of what he was still doing, under Circumstances in which I so little deserved his Affection ; and, more than all, an Emotion of Gratitude, made me break a Silence which began to disquiet him. I did not attempt to justify myself, and confessed I had not treated him in a becoming Manner. I expressed to him, my Regret on that Account, with a Look so sincere, and in Terms so tender and pathetic, that, as he has since told me, he was thereby greatly moved. I promised him
I would

274 *The RIVAL MOTHER.*

I would be only his, but at the same Time intreated that he would not press me so hastily to give him my Hand, assuring him that I should be highly offended in Point of Delicacy, if I had not Time before our Marriage, to convince him, that *Inclination* was my *only* Motive for uniting our Destinies.

He seemed to be chagrined at this Resolution, and so strenuously opposed it, that I was obliged to tell him, I would not dispute any thing my Mother and he should agree upon. She entered the Room as he was kissing my Hand; and she was delighted to see the Air of Satisfaction which appeared in both our Countenances. Mr. *de Mourville* prevailed on her to consent, that she would not retard a Happiness he had so long sighed for.

With your Permission, Madam, said he, to my Mother, in a Fortnight's Time my dear *Leonora* must be mine. But it will not be proper, yet, to make our Marriage Public, as I would have you first give out, if you please, over the whole Town, that you have some considerable Law-suits still depend-

depending, and which will soon be tried; in a few Days after, you may report that you have gained a Cause which hath quite retrieved your Affairs, and then begin to live at a suitable Expence. During that Interval, I will visit you only at Night, and Money shall not be wanting. I will afterwards wait on you, and ask your Consent to marry your amiable Daughter; and thereby I shall avoid the Mortification of hearing it said, that you, and *Mademoiselle de Selnac* are indebted to me for your good Fortune. I hope, Madam, you will approve of these Measures, as nobody will know what has passed between us, for I flatter myself our Confident, *Mademoiselle Duris*, will keep it secret: And she shall have no Cause to complain of my want of Gratitude. That young Woman thanked Mr. *de Mouville*, and I desired she would for the future, live with me, which Offer she accepted with great Joy.

My Mother would publickly have made known the Obligations we lay under to Mr. *de Mouville*, as well as his generous Proceedings, but he again requested
she

276 *The RIVAL MOTHER.*

she would not do it, and we were obliged to comply with his Desire. He passed the whole Evening with us, and it was the most agreeable one my Mother and I had known for a long Time. The same Evening he sent his Valet, who was a sensible young Fellow, to *Paris*, to purchase what was necessary, and we agreed that our Marriage should be celebrated at the Castle of the Marchioness, his Sister.

With a Design to acquaint the Marchioness *de Mesval* with what had passed, he prepared to leave us. We shewed a real Impatience for his Return, but he begged us to wait till the Report of our gaining the Cause should be spread over the whole Town; and we were again obliged to submit to his Opinion. At length he departed, and left me alone with my Mother, who immediately began with drawing a Panegyrick on him, and concluded with asking me, what I thought of a Lover, so tender, so constant, and so generous, as was Mr. *de Mouville*?

I owned to her, that in *my* Eye, he appeared more amiable than ever, and that,
inde-

independant of his Estate, I should prefer him to any other Man in the World. I am pleased to see you have such Sentiments for him, replied my Mother, and hope you will never have Cause to repent the entertaining them.

We continued our Conversation a few Moments longer, and then retired to Bed. I could not get a wink of Sleep, for my Thoughts were filled with Mr. *de Mouville*, and the sudden, and unexpected Change of my Condition.

In a few Days Time, the Report of our having a favourable Verdict in the Cause, as well as that of our Marriage, was spread over the whole Town. In the Interim, Mr. *de Mouville* constantly visited us: He would have taken us, he said, to Madam *de Mesval*'s House, had she not been absent; the Sickness of one of her Husband's Relations having obliged her to go twelve Leagues from hence. She is expected, however, to return this Evening, and proposes to be present at the Celebration of our Nuptials.

These,

278 *The* RIVAL MOTHER.

These, my dear *Julia*, are the Reasons which forced me to make so cold a Return, and which has been so fatal to the Count *de Zilman*. I lament his Fate, and wish it was in my Power, to restore him a Life, which, doubtless, is now no more. The Sight of him threw me into an Emotion I could not conceal, but the Regard I have for Mr. *de Mouville*, has gained the Ascendant of that I had formerly for the Count, which a long Absence has happily effaced; and I cannot think of sacrificing again to him, a Man, who, tho' less agreeable in Person, has, at least an equal Title to my Love, on Account of a Thousand Qualities, less brilliant, it must be confessed, but essentially as good, and, for the future, my whole Heart will be Mr. *de Mouville's*, nothing can ever deprive him of it. And now tell me your real Sentiments, does my Conduct, and the Resolution I have taken, appear blameable to you?

By no means, answered *Julia*, I cannot disapprove the Justice you do Mr. *de Mouville*;

Mouville; but, at the same Time, I cannot help pitying the poor unhappy Count.

Mademoiselle *de Selnac* and *Julia* having conferred a few Moments longer on the sad Effects which the Count's Love had produced, the Clock struck Three, which obliged them to part, that they might take a little Rest, which they so much stood in need of.

The End of the First Volume.

